

**Stressors associated with Clinical
Psychiatric Nursing Experience
among Technical Nursing
Students**

Thesis

**Submitted for Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement Master
Degree Nursing Science (Psychiatric & Mental Health Nursing)**

By

Mohamed Taha Mohamed

B.Sc. In Nursing

Faculty of Nursing, Cairo University

**Faculty of Nursing
Ain Shams University**

2018

**Stressors associated with Clinical
Psychiatric Nursing Experience
among Technical Nursing
Students**

Thesis

**Submitted for Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement
Master Degree Nursing Science (Psychiatric &
Mental Health Nursing)**

Supervised By

Prof. Dr. Zeinab Ioutfi

**Professor of Psychiatric /Mental Health Nursing
Faculty of Nursing - Ain Shams University**

Prof. Dr. Mona Hassan

**Professor of Psychiatric /Mental Health Nursing
Faculty of Nursing - Ain Shams University**

**Faculty of Nursing
Ain Shams University
2018**

Acknowledgements

*My sincere gratitude and compassionating should be praised first for **ALLAH** who always gives me the power to accomplish this work, I feel always indebted to **ALLAH**, the kindest and the most merciful.*

*I would like to express my deepest gratitude and appreciation to **Prof. Dr. Zeinab Loutfi**, Professor of Psychiatric/ Mental Health Nursing Faculty of Nursing Ain Shams University, who devoted much of her time and effort for the completion of this work, No words can also express my hearty thanks to her sincere advices and her valuable experienced support, encouragement, and guidance to accomplish this study.*

*I would like to express my deepest gratitude and appreciation to **Prof. Dr. Mona Hassan**, Professor of Psychiatric/Mental Health Nursing Faculty of Nursing Ain Shams University, who devoted much of her time and effort for the completion of this work, No words can also express my hearty thanks to her sincere advices and her valuable experienced support, encouragement, and guidance to accomplish this study.*

Special thanks are also extended to all the participants in this study who gave their time and cooperation during data collection.

✍ *Mohamed Taha*

Dedication to:

My

Parents

&

Wife

Who always support

And encourage me to accomplish

This study.

List of Contents

Title	Page No.
List of Contents	I
List of Tables	iii
List of Figures	ii
List of Abbreviation	iv
Introduction	1
Aim of the Study	7
Literature Review	8
Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Clinical Practice:	8
Stress	20
Clinical Education in Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing	43
Subjects and Methods	56
Results	66
Discussion	89
Conclusion	111
Recommendations	112
Summary	114
References	122
Appendix	I
Protocol	I
Arabic Summary	- 1 -

List of Tables

Tables. No.	Title	Page No.
Table (1):	Distribution of Socio-Demographic Characteristics among Technical Nursing Students under Study (n=81).....	68
Table (2):	Distribution of Technical Nursing Student's Expectation in Relation to Psychiatric Illness before Studying Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Course.....	70
Table (3):	Distribution of Technical Nursing Student's Expectation in Relation to Psychiatric Patients before Studying Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Course.	72
Table (4):	Distribution of Technical Nursing Student's Expectation in Relation to Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Experience before Studying Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Course.....	74
Table (5):	Distribution of Clinical Stressors as Regarding Nature of Psychiatric Illness among Technical Nursing Students (n=81).	76
Table (6):	Distribution of Clinical Stressors as Regarding Dealing with Psychiatric Patients among Technical Nursing Students (n=81).	78
Table (7):	Distribution of Stress Symptoms during Clinical Course among Technical Nursing Students (n=81).....	80
Table (8):	Relation between Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Studied Sample and Level of Clinical Stressors among Technical Nursing Students (n=81).	83
Table (9):	Relation between Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Studied Sample and Level of Stress Symptoms during Clinical Course among Technical Nursing Students (n=81).	86

List of Figures

Fig. No.	Title	Page No.
Figure (1):	<u>Distribution of level of Clinical Stressors among Technical Nursing Students</u>	81
Figure (2):	<u>Distribution of level of Stress Symptoms during Clinical Course among Technical Nursing Students</u>	82

List of Abbreviation

PMHN..... Psychiatric mental health nursing

ABSTRACT

Background: Clinical practice in the Psychiatric/mental health nursing field is considered as a highly stressful experience for nursing students. **Aim:** To assess stressors associated with clinical psychiatric nursing experience among technical nursing students. **Research design:** A descriptive design was utilized in this study. **Subjects:** A convenient sample of students at technical nursing institute affiliated to El Kasr- El Aini Cairo University, **sample size** (81) students. **Tools:** Data were obtained through three main tools; Socio-demographic interviewing sheet, student expectation questionnaire sheet, and practical stressors interviewing sheet. **Results:** The majority of the technical nursing students expected that, the major cause of psychiatric illness was life stressors. More than half of the studied subjects had clinical stressors from stress volatile nature of the psychiatric patient from calm to aggressive as well as deficiency in resources to handle psychiatric disorder. **Conclusion:** There was a statistically significant relation between gender and satisfaction of studying psychiatric course versus level of clinical stressors. There was highly significant relation between gender versus level of stress symptoms during clinical psychiatric course. **Recommendations:** Reinforce role of nurse as educator and importance in reducing stress during clinical teaching.

Key words: Stressors- Clinical Psychiatric Nursing Experience- Technical Nursing Students.

Introduction

Stress has been acknowledged as a major mental health problem in the 20th century. Research focusing on nurses has commonly found that this population reports high levels of stress. For this reason, research attention has not only been focused on their work environment, but also their training period. The training period is an important time, during which the student acquires the skills and experiences required for the profession. Additionally, training provides a unique opportunity to develop the capabilities of the individual in terms of their own personal resources and coping strategies **(Pakenham& Stafford-Brown, 2012; Galvin& smith, 2015).**

Stress is therefore an important area for further investigation, particularly in educational settings, where it has the potential to interfere with student learning and functioning. Furthermore, stress may lead to higher levels of attrition, which is a major problem for nursing programs worldwide. Stress is a nonspecific response of the body to any kind of demand made up on it. In nursing, it is a situation that produces anxiety responses, mental distress thereby and sleep disturbance. It can affect the whole lifecycle of a

nursing student (**Cameron, Roxburgh& Taylor, 2010; Pulido-Martos, Augusto-Landa& Lopez-Zafra, 2012**).

Students' experiences of stress during nursing education are common, with primary stressors including academic workload and concerns regarding clinical placements. Nursing students experience higher levels of stress than non-nursing undergraduate students, and while specific sources of stress within nursing programs haven't been fully explored, the challenges of the clinical practice environment are speculated to be an important contributor (**Melincavage, 2011; Bartlett, Taylor& Nelson, 2016**).

Most of the available research suggests that the clinical component of the course is particularly stressful. In most nursing curriculums, nursing students spend approximately half of their education within the clinical area; so, it is alarming that they view the clinical practice as incredibly stressful. Nursing students, regardless of the year, experience higher levels of stress, have higher levels of physiological and psychological symptoms than students in other health fields. Research suggests that mental health nursing students are particularly vulnerable to stress and may be struggling to cope (**Chernomas& Shapiro, 2013**).

Psychiatric nursing students will have their own unique stressors specific to their field, as will students in other areas such as adult, child and learning disabilities settings. Nursing students had a much more negative attitude towards psychiatric practice than any other practice. Therefore the need for psychiatric nurses is great. However, reality has shown that students feel negative not only towards mental disorders but also towards mental health staff working in mental hospitals due to biases against mental health (song, 2015).

Undergraduate students often enter psychiatric courses with a preconceived image of aggressive mental patients, which is caused by media representations and aggravated by warnings from their families. These clinical demands could contribute to students' stress during clinical practice and result in negative experiences in psychiatric units. As clinical experience is inherently challenging, educators play a significant role in building a caring atmosphere and identifying the constraints of this experience (Park& Kweon, 2012).

If nursing education doesn't address stigma, it is possible that nurses will hold the same stigmatizing attitudes as have been found in the public, including beliefs that

persons with mental illness are not only in control of their illness but that they caused it. After graduation, 94% of nursing students do not choose the psychiatry field **(Ilic, Reineke, Bohner, Rottgers, Beblo& Driessen, 2013)**.

Negative attitudes towards mental illness and stigma against persons with mental illness remain a concern. Most nursing students experience their first contacts with psychiatric patients during training rotations in psychiatric clinics. Despite their education, psychiatric nursing students often maintained prejudices, believing that patients are dangerous, hostile, and prone to violence. These prejudices have increased stress and anxiety in students about psychiatric clinical. Increased stress and anxiety cause students to stay away from patients with mental illness and limit their communication with them **(Alshowkan& Kamel, 2016)**.

Students not only felt nervous but also fearful, and the level of stress was high. The nursing students worried that psychiatric patients may be too violent. However, the students who had experienced psychiatric practice knew that patients were not dangerous or frightening and helped to improve their attitude. Their empathy skills were also

increased through psychiatric practice (**Koskinen, Mikkonen & Jokinen, 2011**).

Nurse educators likely appreciate that their students experience stress as part of their professional education however, they may not fully be aware of the extent of the distress and the impact it has on students' lives and learning. Moreover, the actions of theory can be significant in ameliorating students' experiences of stress, although a growing body of literature on stress and nursing students exists. The examination of psychiatric nursing students' first clinical experiences will aid educators, clinical supervisors, and nurses in designing training programs, as well as guiding students towards developing positive attitudes towards psychiatric patients and gaining psychiatric nursing skills in the clinic (**El-Ghoroury, 2011**).

Significance of the study:

It is an imperative issue to enhance our understanding of the nursing students' stress experiences during psychiatric clinical courses. So, it is essential to recognize whether the students are equipped adequately with successful coping skills to manage clinical stress. In that case, the quality of

patient care will be improved, and nursing students select this specialty as a future career choice post-graduation.

Psychiatric nursing students will have their own unique stressors specific to their field compared to students in other areas such as adult, child and learning disabilities settings. A study done by **Atteia et al (2017), in Egypt** for assessing nursing students attitude toward psychotic patients, that carried out in Saied Gallal Technical Institute of Nursing, and Ain Shams Technical Institute of Nursing, found that only half of the study students had positive attitude towards psychiatric patients.

Therefore, the need for psychiatric nurses is great. However, reality has shown that students feel negative not only towards mental disorders but also towards mental health staff working in mental hospitals due to biases against mental health.