

Academic Stressors and Coping Patterns among Nursing Students

Thesis

*Submitted For Partial Fulfillment of Master
Degree In Nursing Science
(Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing)*

By

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*Faculty of Nursing
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وَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ
الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ
وَعَلَّمَكَ مَا لَمْ تَكُنْ
تَعْلَمُ وَكَانَ فَضْلُ
اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ عَظِيمًا

صدق الله العظيم

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Abstract

Background: Academic stresses among undergraduate nursing students have been found to be at an even greater risk for developing mental health problems. The sources of stress can be categorized into, academic sources and clinical sources **Aim:** The aim of the current study was to assess academic stressors and coping patterns among nursing students. **Design:** The study was an exploratory descriptive research design. **Setting:** The study was carried out at a faculty of nursing Ain-shams University. **Subjects:** A convenient sample was selected for this study was a performed on 84 nursing student. **Tools:** 1) Self-administered questionnaire sheet. 2) Different sources of stress Scale. 3) Coping Inventory Scale. **Results:** show that academic sources of stress appeared to be the most stressful for all the students due to the study pressure, followed by emotional pressure, concerning clinical stressors the highest types is clinical setting stressors followed by work with different types of patients . Overall, total academic stressors were slightly lower than total clinical stressor. While coping patterns reveals that in emotional-focused coping , the majority of students use religious adaptation followed by positive emotional reinterpretation, concerning problem-focused coping, the majority of students use Seeking social support **Conclusion:** students with high academic stress having highly coping patterns. There was a highly statistically significant relationship between academic stressors studied students and their coping patterns. **Recommendations:** Special remedial programs need to be constructed for students with high academic stressors and low coping patterns to help them improve their academic performance which in turn increase their coping patterns.

Keywords: *Academic Stressors, Coping Patterns, Nursing Students.*

Introduction

A nursing student is a student in a post-secondary educational program that leads to certification and licensing to practice nursing. The title 'nursing student' usually applies to students enrolled in a registered nurse or practical nurse program. A nursing student can be enrolled in a program that leads to a diploma, an associate degree or a Bachelor of Science in nursing **(July 2017)**.

Stress is a mental or physical tension or strain, and it is often referred to as the harmful physical, psychological and emotional responses that occur when an individual is exposed to perceived environmental pressures. Harmful responses to these pressures, known as 'stressors', occur when the requirements of a situation do not match the perceived capabilities, resources or needs of the individual **(Gianaros, Tor & Brain 2015)**.

Academic stress is a psychological condition often experienced by college students as, to some extent, being multidimensional variables, **(Pandey, & Chalise, 2017)**. Students have many stressors from a wide range of sources in their academic life, usually, they respond to these stressors in various manners. The main sources of stress among undergraduate students might contain academic loads, peer pressure being outside the home, financial demands, the transition to a new

developmental phase, and difficulty coping in a new social environment (**Alzayyat, et al., 2015**).

Considerable stress is involved in nursing education. It is found that higher levels of stress and higher levels of physiological and psychological symptoms were found among nursing students than students in other health-related disciplines. Students experience increased tension prior to their clinical rotation and written examination especially their final examination (**Shiferaw, et al., 2015**).

In a study by **Brown, Johnson & McPherson , (2016)** in a Jamaican school of nursing It is found that 50.9% were moderately stressed while 22.8% and 24.6% had high and low levels of stress respectively, due to stress associated with the preparation for and prospect of final examinations received the highest overall mean stress rating, causing “a lot of stress”. Attendances at classes and relationships with lecturers received the lowest mean stress rating.

Coping is established as a key variable in the process of reducing, minimizing or tolerating stress and in preventing psychological distress. Coping is defined as cognitive and emotional attempts to deal with the internal or external demands of the encountered situation. Higher education students cope in different ways with varying levels of success (**Deasy, et al., 2014**).

Managing stress effectively and using healthy coping strategies is an important skill required for students who enrol in Nursing, for optimum performance in their future life (**Shiferaw, Anand & Nemera, 2015**).

Significance of the Study:

Nursing students often work with vulnerable patients who are in need of strong supportive to advocate and assist them to manage with their own health, and these students must be prepared and ready to assume their role with confidence and competence with free any stress.

Academic stress is a condition faced by students when they are unable to bear the burdens involved in higher nursing education. Students who learn and use effective coping patterns to deal with stress will most likely develop a positive self-concept. Students who become overwhelmed with stress may feel hopeless and powerless, leading to a feeling of low self-confidence and self-esteem **Haight, et al, (2016)**. Thus, the present study will be conducted to understand the ways in which college students differ in coping with significant stress experienced by the students and to examine the different ways of coping patterns adopted by them.

The aim of the Study

The aim of this study was to assess academic stressors and coping patterns among nursing students.

Research questions

To achieve the aim of this study, the following questions were formulated:

- What are the different sources of stress among students undertaking during the academic years of nursing study?
- What are the healthy and unhealthy patterns of coping among nursing students?