

# A Study to Assess the Level of Academic Stress and Its Contributing Factors among Nursing Students Studying in Sri Sukhmani College of Nursing, Derabassi, Distt. Molhali, Punjab

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## Abstract

*The present study was conducted to assess the level of academic stress and its contributing factors among nursing students studying in Sri Sukhmani College of Nursing, Derabassi, Distt. Molhali, Punjab. The objectives of study were to assess the level of academic stress and contributing factors of academic stress among nursing students. The qualitative research approach and nonexperimental descriptive research design was used. 100 samples were selected by using systematic random sampling technique from Sri Sukhmani College of Nursing, Derabassi, Distt. Mohali, Punjab. Tool was developed to collect data which consisted of rating scale to assess the academic stress level and questionnaire to assess the contributing factors of academic stress among nursing students. The findings revealed that 94% of students had mild, 6% had moderate and none had severe academic stress. Majority of students (86%) were stressed due heavy examination syllabus, worry about examination and results (86%) and (80%) due to lack of vacations.*

**Keywords:** Academic, Contributing Factors, Nursing, Stress, Students.

## INTRODUCTION

Stress is part of human lifestyle. It can serve as driving force in terms of obtaining results, but on the other hand nonstop stress can act as a killer in terms of performance. It is known fact that students are subjected to different kinds of stressors such as pressure of academics, examinations, entrance exams, social comparisons, teacher's expectations, not having clear understanding of certain subject, lack of time to study, long duration of college, over scheduling, parent's expectations, an uncertain future, workload of assignments, pressure of presentation, obligations to succeed [1]. Students also face social stress caused from one's relationship and from social environment in general such as conflicts in family, ragging, bullying etc. [2]. Personal stressors include failures and setbacks, trauma, being assaulted, personal loss and anxiety. Clinical setting sources of stress include working with dying patients, interpersonal conflict with other nurses, and insecurity about personal clinical competence [3].

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Excessive amount of stress in nursing training predisposes nursing students for difficulties in solving interpersonal conflicts, sleeping disorders, decreased attention, reduced concentration, depression, temptation to cheat in exams, improper behavior [4]. Further stress can ultimately affect the wellbeing of students and lead to illness.

## NEED OF THE STUDY

Stress among college students is rising. Studies indicate that nursing students are more prone to stress than other students. Nursing students have academic stressors like midterm exams, final exams, research project, assignments, deadline of submitting assignments, presentations, number of subjects, lack of free time, long college hours, strict academic criteria, attendance requirement of classes and clinical, clinical area pressure, fear of making mistakes while performing procedures etc. nursing education is demanding can especially stressful. Thus the present study was conducted to assess the level of academic stress and contributing factors of academic stress among nursing students.

## METHODOLOGY

The qualitative research approach and nonexperimental descriptive research design was used. 100 samples were selected by using systematic random sampling technique from Sri Sukhmani College of Nursing, Derabassi, Distt. Mohali, Punjab. Tool was developed to collect data which consisted of rating scale to assess the academic stress level and questionnaire to assess the contributing factors of academic stress among nursing students. Content validity of tool was determined by experts' opinion. Reliability of rating scale to assess the academic stress level among nursing students was determined by split half method and Spearman's brown prophecy formula was used and the value of r was found to be 0.71 and for questionnaire on contributing factors test-retest method was used, Karl Pearson's formula was used to calculate the value of r which was found to be 0.71. Hence the tool was considered reliable. Data collection was done in June/July 2018. The selected subjects were individually asked to fill the tool.

## ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

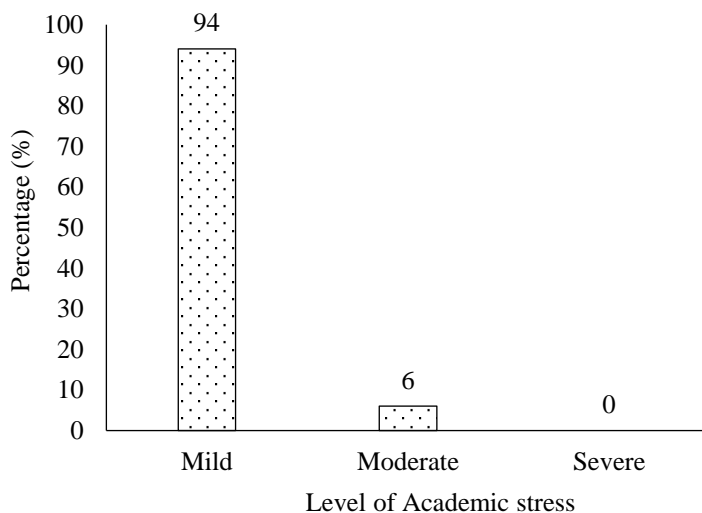
The analysis and interpretation of data was done in accordance with the objectives laid down for the study. Data analysis was calculated using descriptive and inferential statistics. The level of significance was chosen at p level  $\leq 0.05$ .

**Table 1.** Sample Characteristics of nursing students studying in Sri Sukhmani Nursing College of Nursing (N=100)

Characteristics	N	Percentage (%)
<i>Age (in years)</i>		
17-19	28	28
20-22	55	55
>22	17	17
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	11	11
Female	89	89
<i>Type of course</i>		
B.Sc.(N)	72	72
GNM	23	23
Post Basic B.Sc.(N)	5	5
<i>Year of course</i>		
1 <sup>st</sup> year	29	29
2 <sup>nd</sup> year	17	17
3 <sup>rd</sup> year	35	35
4 <sup>th</sup> year	19	19
<i>Type of accommodation</i>		
Hostel	29	29
Day scholar	59	59
Paying guest	12	12

<i>Religion</i>		
Hindu	74	74
Sikh	17	17
Christian/Muslim	9	9
<i>Family Type</i>		
Nuclear	79	79
Joint	21	21
<i>Total family income per month (Rupees)</i>		
Below 20000	19	19
20000–29000	27	27
30000–39000	12	12
40000–49000	10	10
Above 50000	32	32

Table 1 depicts that majority of subjects were female (89%), undergoing B.Sc.(N) course (72%), belonging to Hindu religion (74%), from nuclear family (79%). Nearly more than half (55%) nursing students were of age group 17–20 years, were day scholar (59%). And less than half were in third year (35%) and had total family income per month above Rs. 50000 (32%).



**Figure 1.** Percentage distribution of subjects according to level of academic stress.

Figure 1 depicts that majority of nursing students (94%) had mild academic stress.

**Table 2.** Frequency percentage distribution of nursing students according to contributing factors of academic stress as perceived by them.

Contributing factor	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Poor interest in some subject	60	60
Worry about examination and its result	86	86
Hesitate to ask teacher for detailed explanation	50	50
Not knowing how to prepare for exam	35	35
Slow in getting along with curriculum	40	40
Lack of fluency while speaking English	38	38
Unable to discuss academic failure with parents	51	51

Unable to grasp subject matter	36	36
Last moment preparation for examination	65	65
Examination syllabus too heavy in some subjects	86	86
Burden of presentation and assignments	77	77
Lack of university support	54	54
Lack of enough vacation	80	80
Increase in extracurricular activities	36	36
Biased teacher attitude	44	44
Not enough discussion in class	47	47
Teacher teaching pace is fast	27	27
Incomplete and confusing study material	41	41
Inadequate efficient teachers	34	34
Conflict with teacher	25	25
Time spent in travelling every day to reach college	42	42
Exam papers are tough	40	40
Grade competition with classmates	43	43
Change in lifestyle due to financial reasons	38	38
Serious disagreement with parents	25	25
Excessive disturbance in classroom	54	54
Family problems	22	22
Pressure to come first in class	15	15
Personality of teacher	25	25
Lack of cooperation from friends	42	42
Not able to purchase books for study	18	18
Irregularity in self-study due to clinical posting (evening and night shift duties)	14	14
	50	50

Table 2 reveals that majority of students (86%) were stressed due heavy examination syllabus, worry about examination and results (86%) and due to lack of vacations (80%)

**Table 3.** Association between levels of academic stress among nursing students with their selected demographic variables (N=100).

Demographic variable	N	Mild	Moderate	Chi Square Value	df	p value
<i>Age (in years)</i>						
17–19	28	26	2	0.094 <sup>NS</sup>	2	0.954
20–22	55	52	3			
>22	17	16	1			
<i>Gender</i>						
Male	11	7	4	20.2*	1	0.001
Female	89	87	2			
<i>Type of course</i>						
B.Sc.(N)	72	69	3	2.771 <sup>NS</sup>	2	0.250
GNM	23	20	3			
Post Basic B.Sc.(N)	5	5	0			
<i>Year of course</i>						
1 <sup>st</sup> year	29	26	3	2.188 <sup>NS</sup>	3	0.543
2 <sup>nd</sup> year	17	16	1			
3 <sup>rd</sup> year	35	33	2			
4 <sup>th</sup> year	19	19	0			

<i>Type of accommodation</i>						
Hostel	29	28	1	16.56*	2	0.001
Day scholar	59	58	1			
Paying guest	12	9	4			
<i>Religion</i>						
Hindu	74	70	4	6.315 <sup>NS</sup>	2	0.097
Sikh	17	17	0			
Christian/Muslim	9	7	2			
<i>Family type</i>						
Nuclear	79	74	5	0.048 <sup>NS</sup>	1	0.945
Joint	21	20	1			
<i>Total family income per month (Rupees)</i>						
Below 20000	19	17	2	5.587 <sup>NS</sup>	4	0.2322
20000–29000	27	27	0			
30000–39000	12	10	2			
40000–49000	10	9	1			
Above 50000	32	31	1			

Table 3 shows that there was significant association found between level of academic stress among nursing students with their gender and type of accommodation.

## CONCLUSION

The findings revealed that majority of nursing students had mild academic stress. Majority of students were stressed due heavy examination syllabus, worry about examination and results and due to lack of vacations. There was significant association of academic stress level among nursing students with their gender and type of accommodation.

## DISCUSSION

Stress among nursing students is common phenomenon as nursing profession itself is very demanding and students need to be responsible, hold professional and ethical values.

Majority of subjects in present study were female (89%), undergoing B.Sc.(N) course (72%), belonging to Hindu religion (74%), from nuclear family (79%). Nearly more than half (55%) nursing students were of age group 17–20 years, were day scholar (59%). And less than half were in third year (35%) and had total family income per month above Rs. 50000 (32%) [5].

The present study revealed that majority of nursing students (94%) had mild, and few (6%) had moderate academic stress whereas the finding of study conducted by Prasad CV, Suresh A, Thomas DK, Pitty MK, Beebi S, Multazim V (2013), revealed that majority of students (51.6%) had mild and less than half (46%) had moderate stress [6].

The present study findings reveal that majority of students (86%) were stressed due heavy examination syllabus, worry about examination and results (86%) and due to lack of vacations (80%) [7]. More than half of the subjects perceived last moment preparation for examination (65%), poor interest in some subjects (60%) and lack of university support (54%), excessive noise in classroom (54%) as contributing factor for their academic stress. Nearly half of subjects considered hesitation to ask teacher for detailed explanation (50%), not enough discussion in classroom by teacher (47%), irregularity in self study due to clinical posting (50%) and inability to discuss academic failure with parents (51%) as factor for their stress [8]. Less than half of the subjects related their academic stress due to not knowing how to prepare for exam (35%), slow in getting along with curriculum (40%), lack of fluency while speaking English (38%), inability to grasp subject matter (36%), increased extra-curricular activities (36%), biased teacher attitude (44%), inadequate efficient teacher (34%),

time spent on travelling every day (42%), exam papers being tough and valued enough (40%), grade competition with classmates (43%), change in lifestyle for financial reasons (38%) and personality of teacher (42%) [9]. Few nursing students considered teacher fast pace of teaching (27%), conflict with teacher (25%), serious disagreement with teachers and parents (25%), family problems (22%), conflict with roommate (15%), pressure to come first in class (25%), lack of co operation from friends (18%) and inability to purchase books for study (14%) as factor for their academic stress.

The present study results related to contributing factors of academic stress were supported by findings of study conducted by Deka Meghali (2016) which revealed academic factors like examination and results as factors of stress by majority of students [10].

The study results showed that there was association of gender and type of accommodation of nursing students with their academic stress which was supported by findings of study conducted by Virna CFR, Islene VB, Raquel SF, Vera Lucia MP, Theraza MM (2017) [11, 12].

### IMPLICATION OF STUDY

The study finding suggest that certain measures should be taken by college to help nursing students to deal with the academic stress like student counseling sessions, stress management programs, relaxation therapies, etc.

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