A Study on the Assessment of Stress Levels Among College Students in a Nursing College

Erleni Abdulah Sulaiman

Abstract: *Stress can be defined as a state of worry or mental tension caused by a difficult situation. Stress is a natural human response that prompts us to address challenges and threats in our lives.[1] Late adolescence and emerging adulthood are transitional periods marked by major physiological and psychological changes. Academic stress may be the single most dominant stress factor that affects the mental well-being of college students. The transition of students from high school level to the college level is inherently stressful for students. From this perspective, this research was aimed to investigate the level of stress among the College students. Descriptive research was undertaken to assess the students' level of stress. A randomly drawn participants (N = 40) completed Perceived Stress Scale assessing their levels of stress. The results showed that 27.50% students have low stress and 10.00% students have high stress level. The results showed that majority of the student's experienced moderate stress (62.50%).*

Keywords: Stress, College Students, Mental tension, Human response, Adolescence

1. Introduction

Nowadays, there is increasing pressure and stress in students. This might be related to studies, examination, peer, teachers or parent's pressure. Stress is difficult to define. Selye originally suggested that stress is simply the rate of wear and tear in the body. Stress has physical and emotional effects on us and can create positive or negative influence on us. As a positive influence, stress can help compel us to action. As a negative influence, it can result in feelings of distrust, rejection, anger, and depression, which in turn can lead to health problems such as headaches, upset stomach rashes, insomnia, ulcers, high blood pressure, heart disease, and stroke.[2]

Adolescence is a transitional period in development characterized by major physiological and psychological changes. It is accompanied by the maturation of several stress-responsive regions of the brain. Stress among undergraduate and graduate students is multifactorial, arising from both academic and non-academic factors, including socio-cultural, environmental, and psychological attributes.[3]

Statement of the problem
"A study to assess the level of stress among college students in a selected College of Nursing"

Objectives of the study
To assess the level of stress among the college students.

2. Research Methodology

Research Approach: In view of the nature of the problem under study and to accomplish the objectives of the study, quantitative approach was found to be appropriate to determine the level of stress among the college students.

Research Design: Descriptive research with pre-test only design was used to determine the level of stress among the college students.

Research Setting: The study was conducted at College of Nursing. The total accessible population of students was 120.

Study Population: In this study, the population comprises of Second semester Students studying in College of Nursing.

Sample: The present study was conducted on 40 second year students, who were available during the period of data collection.

Sampling Technique: In this study Simple Random sampling technique was used to select the sample. Sample consists of 40 second semester students which were selected by lottery method.

Data collection Instrument/Tool: In the present study, data collection instrument used was Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) to assess the stress level.

Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) comprised two sections:

Section A: Deals with demographic data related to the students.
Section B: Perceived Stress Scale is a classic stress assessment tool. It comprised of 10 items. Perceived Stress Scale A more precise measure of personal stress can be determined by using a variety of instruments that have been designed to help measure individual stress levels. The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) is a classic stress assessment instrument. This tool, while originally developed in 1983, remains a popular choice for helping us understand how different situations affect our feelings and our perceived stress. The questions in this scale ask about your feelings and thoughts during the last month.

Scoring pattern/criteria to assess stress: Individual scores on the PSS can range from 0 to 40 with higher scores indicating higher perceived stress.
1) Scores ranging from 0-13 would be considered low stress.
2) Scores ranging from 14-26 would be considered moderate stress.
3) Scores ranging from 27-40 would be considered high perceived stress

Data collection procedure: In the process of data collection, The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) were distributed to the

selected participants in their classroom. As the level of education was known to understand the English language of item statements, the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) was used with no translation to the local language. Thus, the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) was easily administered by the participants

Data analyses procedure: First, data were inputted into 21 SPSS version. Then, descriptive statistics such as frequency of distributions, mean, and standard deviation were used to summarize and analyze the data.

Results

Descriptive statistics of the study variables:

Section I

Table 1: Distribution of the participants according to the demographic variables using frequency and percentage. (N=40)

S. No.	Variables	Participants (n=40)	
		f	%
1	**Age in year**		
	19years	24	60
	20 years	16	40
2	**Gender**		
	Male	0	0
	Female	30	100

Section II

Table 2: To determine the level of stress, the study employed descriptive statistics (frequency distribution). (N=40)

Levels of stress		Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Low stress	0-13	11	27.50%
Moderate stress.	14-26	25	62.50%
High perceived stress	27-40	4	10.00%
	Total	40	100%
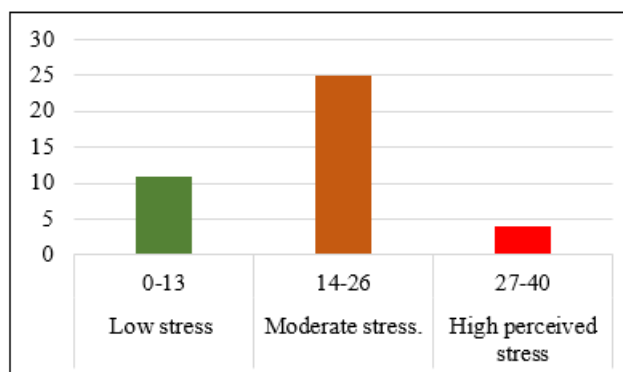
Graph 1: Frequency distribution of the level of stress.

3. Discussion

This research was aimed to examine the levels of stress among college students. The results showed that 27.50% students have low stress and 10.00% students have high stress level. The results showed that majority of the student's experienced moderate stress (62.50%).

Additionally, in concord to our finding, Bataineh (2013)[7] reported that college students are more stressed with financial problems, inadequate resources like computers, books, lecturers, and overload hours every semester as academic stressors.

Limitations and Future Research Directions:
- The time duration of the study was short duration.
- The study was limited to investigator experience and knowledge regarding the field.
- The small sample size, thus the results cannot be generalized to an extent.
- The study was limited to the subject who had given informed written consent to participate in the study.
- The influence of mass media and fast food outlets on body image perception was not explored.
- The study was limited to the subject who had given informed written consent to participate in the study.

References

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