



A Pilot Study to Assess Academic Stress among B.Sc. Nursing Students in Selected Nursing Colleges, Gulbarga, Karnataka

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<p>Abstract: Background: Academic stress is a significant concern among nursing students due to rigorous curricula, clinical responsibilities, and personal commitments. Persistent stress may adversely affect academic performance, psychological well-being, and professional competence. Objectives: To assess the level of academic stress among B.Sc. nursing students in selected nursing colleges, Gulbarga. To determine the association between academic stress and selected demographic variables. Methods: A quantitative descriptive cross-sectional pilot study was conducted among 60 B.Sc. nursing students selected using simple random sampling from selected nursing colleges in Gulbarga, Karnataka. Data were collected using a structured demographic proforma and an Academic Stress Rating Scale. Reliability of the tool was established ($r = 0.86$). Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics including frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, and Chi-square test. Results: Among 60 participants, 63.33% experienced moderate stress, 21.67% high stress, and 15% low stress. The overall mean stress score was 91.81 ± 21.91. No statistically significant association was found between stress level and selected demographic variables ($p > 0.05$). Conclusion: The majority of nursing students experienced moderate academic stress. Early identification and implementation of stress management interventions are recommended.</p> <p>Keywords: Academic stress, Nursing students, Pilot study, Gulbarga, Stress management.</p> <p>Copyright © 2023 The Author(s): This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC 4.0) which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium for non-commercial use provided the original author and source are credited.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Research Paper</p>
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INTRODUCTION

Stress is a psychological and physiological response to demanding situations. Academic stress has become increasingly prevalent among healthcare students, particularly nursing students, due to demanding coursework, clinical postings, examinations, and performance expectations. [1]

Nursing education combines theoretical learning with intensive clinical practice. Students often struggle to balance academic workload, clinical exposure, financial responsibilities, and family commitments. In regions like Gulbarga (Kalaburagi), where many students come from varied socio-economic backgrounds, academic stress may be further compounded by adjustment issues and limited coping resources.

Identifying stress levels among nursing students is crucial, as unmanaged stress may lead to burnout,

anxiety, reduced academic performance, and decreased quality of patient care in the future. [2-3]

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Design: Quantitative descriptive cross-sectional pilot study.

Setting: Selected nursing colleges in Gulbarga (Kalaburagi), Karnataka.

Sample Size: 60 B.Sc. Nursing students.

Sampling Technique: Simple random sampling.

Inclusion Criteria

- Students enrolled in B.Sc. Nursing (1st–4th year)
- Willing to participate

Exclusion Criteria

- Students absent during data collection
- Students unwilling to provide consent

Tool for Data Collection

- Section I:** Demographic proforma (age, gender, year of study, stress reduction program attendance)
- Section II:** Academic Stress Rating Scale

Stress was categorized as:

- High stress: 115–170
- Moderate stress: 60–114
- Low stress: 1–59

Validity and Reliability

Content validated by five nursing experts.

Reliability established using test–retest method ($r = 0.86$).

Data Collection Procedure

After obtaining institutional permission and informed consent, data were collected using Google Forms. Confidentiality was maintained.

Data Analysis

- Descriptive statistics: Frequency, percentage, mean, SD
- Inferential statistics: Chi-square test
- Significance level: $p < 0.05$

RESULTS

Demographic Characteristics

- Majority (41.66%) were aged 20–21 years
- 93.33% were female
- Equal distribution across academic years
- 86.67% had not attended any stress reduction program

Level of Stress	Frequency	Percentage
High	13	21.67%
Moderate	38	63.33%
Low	9	15%

The majority (63.33%) experienced moderate stress.

Mean Stress Score

Overall mean stress score: 91.81 ± 21.91

First-year students had relatively higher mean scores compared to other batches.

Association with Demographic Variables

Chi-square analysis showed no statistically significant association between academic stress and:

- Age
- Gender
- Year of study
- Attendance at stress reduction programs

($p > 0.05$)

DISCUSSION

The findings of the present pilot study indicate that most nursing students in Gulbarga experience moderate levels of academic stress. Similar findings have been reported in various Indian and international studies, suggesting that nursing education inherently involves stress-inducing factors. [4]

First-year students showed comparatively higher stress levels, possibly due to transition challenges and adaptation to professional education. Lack of stress management training among most participants highlights the need for structured intervention programs. [5]

The absence of a significant association between stress and demographic variables suggests that academic stress is a generalized phenomenon across student categories. [6]

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that academic stress is prevalent among B.Sc. nursing students in Gulbarga, with the majority experiencing moderate stress. Although no significant demographic associations were identified, the findings emphasize the need for:

- Regular stress assessment programs
- Institutional counseling services
- Stress management workshops
- Incorporation of coping strategies in nursing curriculum

Early intervention can enhance academic performance, mental well-being, and professional readiness.

Limitations

- Small sample size (Pilot study)
- Limited to selected colleges in Gulbarga
- Self-reported data may involve response bias

Recommendations

- Conduct large-scale multi-center studies
- Implement experimental studies to evaluate stress reduction interventions
- Introduce structured stress management modules in curriculum
- Establish student mental health support systems

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