

Stress, Mal-adjustment and Coping among Nursing Students: A Systematic Review



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Abstract

Background: Levels of stress are higher for health professionals than for other workers. A higher number of stressors with negative health consequences are present, especially among nursing professionals including nursing students. Stress is a psychosocial factor that influences the academic performance and well-being of this group. Life events play a large part in determining stress levels which include those that are expected and unexpected. In the face of stressful events and change, the individual's capacity to employ adaptive methods of coping with stress is of crucial importance to physical and psychological health. During their clinical training, nursing students encounter stressful situations of the kind that nurses do in practice. This review is to access the facts from the broad range of stress related studies. **Aim:** The aim of the systematic review was to summarize the available literature on the main sources of stress and adjustment problems of nursing students and its relationship with coping styles adopted by them. **Methods:** Computerized literature searches were performed on the Pub med, Medline, CINAHL, Cochrane Library databases to locate all the articles on stress among college students. Researcher came across NRSI database to access studies done in India also. Various Journals were also included in the review literatures on stressors in nursing students. **Results:** The search comprised of all the articles on stress, maladjustment and coping styles adopted by nursing students. 90 abstracts of scientific studies were reviewed. Out of which 24 studies (full articles) were on stress, suicide behavior and coping strategies among school and collegiate students. Eleven full articles were located that had investigated stress, maladjustment and coping styles adopted by nursing students i.e. Sources of stress along with perceived stress in nursing students (2), Occurrence of social anxiety among nursing students (1), Stressful life events, coping styles including life skills (5), and Effect of stress management program of nursing students (3). The time period included in the reviews was from 1990 to 2014. **Conclusion:** Evidences from the reviews suggested that it might be useful to train students for various coping skills as a step towards better self-management as they are found to have limited coping skills. Thus, there is need for orientation and counseling of medical and nursing students at the beginning of academic sessions in the college.

Key Words: Stress, Maladjustment, Nursing Students, Coping skills.

Background

Stress refers to a dynamic interaction between the individual and the environment. In this interaction, demands, limitations and opportunities related to work may be perceived as threatening to surpass the individual's resources and skills (Kohler et al. 2006)¹. In case of disarrangement, this interaction may lead to cognitive, emotional and behavioral alterations. Stress can serve as a driving force in terms of obtaining results,

but on the other hand, non-stop stress can act as a killer in terms of performance. It is a known fact that students are subjected to different kinds of stressors, such as the pressure of academics with an obligation to succeed, an uncertain future, and difficulties of integrating into the system. **The World Health Organization** has estimated that stress-related disorders will be one of the leading causes of disability by the year 2020. About 40 million people in India come under the age of 15 to 35 years; Indian youth is the most vulnerable group for

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