Assessment of Challenges Faced and Coping Strategies Adopted by Nursing Students in Psychiatric Ward of Selected Hospitals

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Abstract

Aim: The aim of this study is to assess the challenges faced and coping strategies adopted by nursing students in psychiatric ward.

Materials and Methods: An quantitative research approach with descriptive study design was used for the study. The study was conducted at selected hospitals of selected city. The sample comprised 140 3rd-year basic B.Sc. Nursing students posted in the psychiatric ward of the selected hospital of selected city. Sample was selected using non-probability convenient sampling technique. Data were collected using a self-structured Likert scale on challenges faced by nursing students in psychiatric ward; questionnaire which comprises 35 items is scored on a rating scale. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. In that Fishers exact test for association of coping strategies adopted by nursing students in psychiatric ward with their demography.

Results: The results of this study showed that nursing students were using a variety of strategies to cope with work-related stress in the clinical setting. To actively deal with the clinical setting's stress, participants used strategies to develop their professional competency, correct their mistakes, confront stressful situations, and reflect on stressful issues. Development of professional competency was one of their most important strategies for coping with the stress of the clinical environment. In this study, 4% of the students had moderate coping (Score 37–72) and 96% of them had good coping.

Conclusion: The findings of the study concluded that the 4% of the students had moderate coping and 96% of them had good coping.

Keywords: Assessment, coping strategies, nursing students, psychiatric ward

INTRODUCTION

Mental illness is devastating disorders. Unfortunately, this diagnosis is not well understood by the public. Often those who have mental illness are stigmatized as being "crazy;" "mad" and millions of them suffer in silence. There are reports of increase in mental illness across the country.[1]

These increases have serious implications for psychiatric nursing as more persons are diagnosed with mental illness, the greater the need for psychiatric nurses.[2]

Psychiatric nurses are the nursing professionals providing a large portion of the care to individuals and families who are fortunate enough to access psychiatric hospitals. Yet, just as the mental health field is not without obstacles and challenges, psychiatric nurse faces a number of obstacles and challenges as well.[3]

Clinical learning plays an important role in nursing education, as it provides opportunities for student nurses to apply the theory learned in the classroom to the real world of clinical nursing (Hayman-White and Happel, 2005). It is also a socialization process through which student nurses are inducted into the practices, expectations and real-life work environment of the nursing profession. Clinical education is a vital component of psychiatric nursing science, as it provides student nurses with the opportunity to combine cognitive, psychomotor, and affective skills, thus gaining knowledge,

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skills, and experience in the clinical psychiatric learning environment. Secomb (2008) states that it is important for student nurses to have access to the "real-world situations" (clinical placements) to apply their skills, knowledge, and attitudes, which enable a level of competence during clinical practice. Student nurses often perceive the psychiatric nursing placement as a stark contrast to the general nursing settings (Charleston and Happel, 2006). This view on psychiatric nursing placement is supported by Sharif and Masoumi (2005), who added that 3rd- and 4th-year nursing students reported that the clinical psychiatric learning environment was the most stressful part of the nursing program, as it involves unfamiliar areas and difficult psychiatric patients.[4]

Coping is defined as an individual's capacity to face and adapt to stressful situations; an ability that allows people to react to behavior, thoughts, and emotions caused by such events. Hirsch *et al*. (2015) a study was conducted in, Brazil to identify predictors of stress and coping strategies adopted by nursing students. The method is adopted by A cross-sectional study conducted with 146 nursing students. The research instruments consisted of the ways of coping questionnaire and the instrument for the assessment of stress in nursing students. Data were analyzed using the Pearson's correlation coefficient and regression analysis. The results of study predictors of stress were identified: Professional education, acquired practical knowledge, and free time and leisure. Predictors of stress were associated with denial and escape-avoidance coping strategies.[5]

Objectives

The objectives of the study were as follows:
1. To assess challenges faced by nursing student in psychiatric ward of selected hospitals
2. To assess coping strategies adopted by nursing student in psychiatric ward of selected hospitals
3. To find the association between the study finding with selected demographic variables.

Assumptions

1. Nursing students face various types of challenges in psychiatric ward of selected hospitals
2. Nursing students adopts variety of coping strategies in psychiatric ward of selected hospitals.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research approach

The research method adopted for the present study is quantitative approach.

Research design

In the present study, the investigator selected the descriptive study design, keeping in the view of objectives of the study.

Setting of the study

The present study was conducted in psychiatric ward of selected hospitals.

Population

The population of the study is nursing student posted in psychiatric hospitals.

Sample and sampling technique

In the present study, non-probability convenient sampling technique uses by the investigator.

Sample size

Total sample size for this study is 140 3rd-year basic B.Sc. nursing students.

Sampling criteria

Inclusion criteria

1. Students willing to participate
2. Students enrolled in 3rd-year basic B.Sc. Nursing program
3. Students at the time of data collection.

Exclusion criteria

1. Students enrolled in GNM, post B.Sc. Nursing, and M.Sc. Nursing program.

Description of the tool

The tool used in the present study was demographic data age, gender, and marital status. Self-structured Likert scale on challenges faced by nursing students in psychiatric ward. Questionnaire which comprises 35 items positive item is scored on a rating scale of 1 (never) to 5 (very often) and negative item is scored on rating scale of 5 (never) to 1 (very often), with a total score range of 1–165 (low challenges score <55, moderate challenges score 56–110, and high challenges score 111–165).

Statistics

Descriptive statistics

Frequency and percentage distribution are used to analyze the demographic data.

Inferential statistics

Fisher's exact test used to assess the association of coping strategies adopted by nursing students in psychiatric ward with their demography.

RESULTS

The data were entered into master sheet for tabulation and statistical processing the obtained data were analyzed, organized, and presented under the following headings:

Section I

It deals with the analysis of nursing student's demographic data age, gender, and marital status.

Section II

It deals with the analysis of data related to challenges faced by nursing student in psychiatric ward.

Section III

Analysis of data related to the coping strategies adopted by nursing student in psychiatric ward.

Section IV

Analysis of data related to the association of challenges and coping strategies of nursing students with selected demographic variables.

Section I

Description of samples (nursing students) based on their demographic data.

Table 1 shows that among 140 samples, age of the samples 62.86% of the samples age between 17 and 20 years. About 37.14% of the samples age between 21 and 24 years. Gender distribution shows that 27.14% of samples were males while 72.86% were females. Marital status shows that 94.29% are unmarried, 5.00% are married, and 0.71% is separated status [Table 1].

Section II

Analysis of data related to challenges faced by nursing student in psychiatric ward.

Table 2 describes the information of the challenges faced by nursing students in psychiatric ward. About 19.29% of the students had moderate challenges (Score 56–110) and 80.71% of them had high challenges (Score 111–165) [Table 2].

Table 1: Description of samples (nursing students) based on their demographic data in terms of frequency and percentage. $n=140$

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
17–20	88	62.86
21–24	52	37.14
25–28	0	0
29–32	0	0
33–35	0	0
Gender		
Male	38	27.14
Female	102	72.86
Marital status		
Unmarried	132	94.29
Married	7	5.00
Separated	1	0.71
Widow/Widower	0	00

Table 2: Challenges faced by nursing students in psychiatric ward. $n=140$

Challenges in psychiatric ward	Frequency	Percentage
Low challenges (score<55)	0	0.0
Moderate challenges (score 56–110)	27	19.29
High challenges (score 111–165)	113	80.71

Table 3 describe the information of the challenges (according to Domains) faced by nursing students in psychiatric ward.

- Challenges of communication: 35.0% of nursing students had moderate challenges (score 16–30) and 65.0% of them had high challenges (31–45)
- Challenges of skill: 22.1% of nursing students had moderate challenges (score 14–26) and 77.9% of had high challenges (27–40)
- Challenges of knowledge: 57.9% of nursing students had moderate challenges (score 11–20) and 42.1% of had high challenges (21–30)
- Challenges of safety: 5.0% nursing students had low challenges (score 1–8), 83.6% had moderate challenges (score 9–16), and 11.4% had high challenges (17–25)
- Challenges of anxiety: 19.3% of nursing students had moderate challenges (12–22) and 80.7% of them had high challenges (23–35) [Table 3].

Section III

Section III: Analysis of data related to the coping strategies adopted by nursing student in psychiatric ward.

Table 4 describes the information of the coping strategies of nursing students in psychiatric ward. About 4% of the students had moderate coping (Score 37–72) and 96 % of them had good coping (Score 73–112) [Table 4].

Table 5 describes the information of the coping (according to Domains) faced by nursing students in psychiatric ward.

- Coping related to communication: 10.7% of nursing students had moderate coping (score 6–10) and 89.3% of them good coping (score 11–16)
- Coping related to skill: 2.9% of nursing students had moderate coping (score 7–12) and 97.1% of had good coping (score 13–20)
- Coping related to knowledge: 5.0% of nursing students had moderate coping (score 7–12) and 95.0 % of had good coping (13–20)
- Coping related to safety: 22.1% nursing students had moderate coping (score 9–16) and 77.9% had good coping (score 17–24)
- Coping related to anxiety: 0.7% of nursing students had no coping (score 1–10), 12.1% of them had moderate coping (score 11–20), and 77.9% had good coping (21–32).

- Coping related to communication: 10.7% of nursing students had moderate coping (score 6–10) and 89.3% of them good coping (score 11–16)

Table 3: Distribution of samples based on their challenges (according to Domains) faced by nursing students in psychiatric ward. $n=140$

Challenges Domain	Challenges (%)			Total
	Low challenges	Moderate challenges	High challenges	
Communication	0	49 (35.0)	91 (65.0)	140
Skill	0	31 (22.1)	109 (77.9)	140
Knowledge	0	81 (57.9)	59 (42.1)	140
Safety	7 (5.0)	117 (83.6)	16 (11.4)	140
Anxiety	0	27 (19.3)	113 (80.7)	140

- Coping related to skill: 2.9% of nursing students had moderate coping (score 7–12) and 97.1% of had good coping (score 13–20)
- Coping related to knowledge: 5.0% of nursing students had moderate coping (score 7–12) and 95.0 % of had good coping (13–20)
- Coping related to safety: 22.1% nursing students had moderate coping (score 9–16) and 77.9% had good coping (score 17–24)
- Coping related to anxiety: 0.7% of nursing students had no coping (score 1–10), 12.1% of them had moderate coping (score 11–20), and 77.9% had good coping (21–32) [Table 5].

Section IV

Analysis of data related to challenges faced by nursing students in psychiatric ward with their demography.

Since all $P > 0.05$, none of the demographic variables was found to have significant association with the challenges faced by nursing students in psychiatric ward [Table 6].

Since all $P > 0.05$, none of the demographic variables was found to have significant association with the coping strategies adopted by nursing students in psychiatric ward [Table 7].

Discussion

The results of this study showed that nursing students were using a variety of strategies to cope with work-related stress in the clinical setting. To actively deal with the clinical setting's stress, participants used strategies to develop their professional competency, correct their mistakes, confront stressful situations, and reflect on stressful issues. Development of professional competency was one of their most important strategies for coping with the stress of the clinical environment. Due to lack of knowledge or confidence in their professional skills, participants were faced with stress throughout their entire academic education; hence, they recognized the development of professional competency as a problem-based solution in dealing with their stress. Therefore, clinical instructors should create an atmosphere in which nursing students express their skill in conducting procedures without fear of instructors' judgment, and in which instructor's support students in the process of gaining professional competency. In this study, 4% of the students had moderate coping (score 37–72) and 96% of them had good coping.

Similar study conducted by Hasan AA, on work stress,

Table 4: Coping strategies by nursing students in psychiatric ward. $n=140$

Coping strategies adopted by nursing students	Frequency	Percentage
No coping (score<36)	0	0
Moderate coping (score 37–72)	5	3.57
Good coping (score 73–112)	135	96.43

Table 5: Distribution of samples based on their coping strategies (according to Domains) of nursing students in psychiatric ward. $n=140$

Coping Domain	Coping (%)			Total
	Low coping	Moderate coping	High coping	
Communication	0	15 (10.7)	125 (89.3)	140
Skill	0	4 (2.9)	136 (97.1)	140
Knowledge	0	7 (5.0)	133 (95.0)	140
Safety	0	31 (22.1)	109 (77.9)	140
Anxiety	1 (0.7)	17 (12.1)	122 (87.1)	140

Table 6: Fishers exact test for association of challenges faced by nursing students in psychiatric ward with their demography. $n=140$

Demographic variables	Frequency	%	Low challenges	Moderate challenges	High challenges	P-value
Age in years						
17–20	88	62.86	0	18	70	0.814
21–24	52	37.14	0	9	43	
25–28	0	0	0	0	0	
29–32	0	0	0	0	0	
33–35	0	0	0	0	0	
Gender						
Male	38	27.14	0	4	34	0.173
Female	102	72.86	0	23	79	
Marital status						
Unmarried	132	94.29	0	27	105	0.362
Married	7	5.0	0	0	7	
Separated	1	0.71	0	0	1	
Widow/Widower	0	0	0	0	0	

Table 7: Fishers exact test for association of coping strategies adopted by nursing students in psychiatric ward with their demography. *n*=140

Demographic variables	Frequency	%	No coping	Moderate coping	Good Coping	*P*-value
Age in years						
17–20	88	62.86	0	2	86	0.544
21–24	52	37.14	0	3	49	
25–28	0	0	0	0	0	
29–32	0	0	0	0	0	
33–35	0	0	0	0	0	
Gender						
Male	38	27.14	0	2	36	0.883
Female	102	72.86	0	3	99	
Marital status						
Unmarried	132	94.29	0	5	127	0.854
Married	7	5.0	0	0	7	
Separated	1	0.71	0	0	1	
Widow/widower	0	0	0	0	0	

coping strategies, and levels of depression among nurses working in Mental Health Hospital in post-said city. The results obtained from the preliminary analysis of stress level showed that the majority of the respondents had classified the level of stress perceived in the psychiatric setting as a moderate level (67.7%). However, only around 16% of the sample recognized working in the psychiatric setting as sever level. Followed by low and high levels (16.9% and 15.4% respectively).[6]

Similar study conducted by Rafati *et al*., "Coping strategies of Nursing students for dealing with stress in clinical setting: A qualitative study," the results obtained from the study is "Seeking well-being" as the main theme and three categories of "Active confrontation with stress," "mastering the mind and body," and "avoidance" were obtained from data analysis.[7]

Conclusion

It is important for student nurses to have access to the "real-world situations" (clinical placements) in order to apply their skills, knowledge and attitudes, which enable a level of competence during clinical practice. Student nurses often perceive the psychiatric nursing placement as a stark contrast to the general nursing settings. This study concluded that 4%

of the students had moderate coping and 96% of them had good coping.

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