

“A Study to Assess the Perceived Stress Level and Its Coping Strategies Among 1st year B.Sc. Nursing Students of Arya Nursing College, Changsari With a View to Develop an Information Booklet on Management of Stress”

Ms.Balari Dkhar,Ms. Cherish Mikari R Marak,Ms.Dipika Kalita, Ms.G. Chiin Byak Hoih, Ms.Lakynthiew Lyngkhai, Ms.Merolyn Lalrinkimi, Ms.Pdianghun Suchiang, Ms.Sanghamitra Buragohain, Ms.Irom Devina, Ms.Khaidem Anjibala.

Post Basic B.Sc. Nursing 2nd year,
Arya Nursing College, Changsari, Assam.

Ms. IromDevina,

Dept. Of Mental Health Nursing, Arya Nursing College, Changsari, Assam.

Ms. Khaidem Anjibala

Dept. Of Mental Health Nursing, Arya Nursing College, Changsari, Assam.

Abstract:

Background: Nursing is a profession which requires commitment to provide a service that benefits individuals and the community. Nursing students spend a lot of hours to study and to practice in the clinical settings that there is inadequate time for other activities. Persistent stress from various sources often affect health of students and could lead to psychological distress. The perception of stress and ability to handle stress is largely determined by the coping styles used by the student. The student who perceive their stress levels as very high and are not able to cope effectively with the situation may often become prey to many physical and psychological health issues. Undergraduate nursing student should develop skills for coping with the stress which is essential for day to day life and in the nursing career. Coping is the ability to adapt to stressful situation and to adjust in order to maintain a balance life and the ability to meet new challenges.

Methodology: A quantitative descriptive study was carried out on 1st year B.Sc. Nursing students of Arya Nursing College at Arya Nursing College Nij – Sindhurighopa, Changsari, Kamrup (R) Guwahati, Assam. A total of 59 1st year B.Sc. Nursing students were selected by Convenient sampling technique. Data was collected using self administered structured questionnaire, Modified Perceived Stress Scale and Modified Coping Behaviour Inventory. Data were analysed in term of descriptive and inferential statistics.

Results: The study revealed that majority 64.4% of the respondents have moderate perceived stress level, 15.3% have mild perceived stress level, and 20.3% have severe perceived stress level. Among the 59 respondents 15.3% have low coping strategies, 69.4% have moderate coping strategies and 15.3% have high coping strategies. The chi-square shows that there is significant association between perceived stress level with their age (in years) ($\chi^2=11.79$, $df=2$, $p=5.99$). However, perceived stress level have no significant association with gender, parents occupation, family income (monthly), type of family, selection of course, previous experience of hostel stay and medium of instruction in the college with the selected demographic variable.

Conclusion: The present study reveals that majority of the participant experiences a moderate perceived stress level and a moderate coping strategies, which illustrate the need for stress management programs and provisions of suitable support. Seminars, workshop, webinar can be conducted on the topic to develop the skills of stress management. It is important to have a curriculum that emphasis on the management of stress.

Key Word: Assess, perceived stress, coping strategies, nursing students, information booklet.

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I. Introduction

“The greatest weapon against stress is our ability to choose one thought over another.”

-William Jones.

Stress is a “state produced by a change in the environment that is perceived as challenging, threatening, or damaging to a person’s dynamic balance or equilibrium.” Stressors are the events or situations change or stimulus that evokes stress¹. Nursing students practice a lot hour of study and inadequate time for other activities. In addition, they spend a substantial time in the clinical areas, with the heavy responsibility of being accountable for patients.² Nursing is a very challenging profession, which requires very stringent training since initial years of nursing education. Throughout the training period, students are exposed to various stressful situations. Inability to cope up with varied stressors may lead to psychological distress and impede ‘students’ pursuits of nursing career³.

The American College Health Association National College Health Assessment (ACHA,2009,2010) data revealed over one third of all postsecondary education students ranked stress as their highest health impediment, followed with sleep issues, depression, and anxiety⁴. College and under graduate nursing students experience similar stressors related to academic namely : midterm and final examination, writing seminar and presentation / clinical reports and other assignments. Another source of stress peculiar to nursing is the clinical components of the educational programme. Nursing students have to be fully prepared for the clinical experience on the wards and community settings which is accompanied with lot of anxiety¹.

Few studies have documented the prevalence of stress among the B.Sc. Nursing students to and it varies according to geographical area. A study conducted in South India in the year 2016 showed the prevalence of severe stress was 7.5%. In another study conducted in Maharashtra in the year 2011 showed that 70% of nursing students had stress⁵. One of the skills that an undergraduate nursing student should develop is learning to cope with stress which is necessary for every day’s life and nursing career. Coping is the ability to appraise the stressful situation with the goal of adaptation or adjustment to the change in order to regain balance and develop the power and ability to meet new challenges¹.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

“A study to assess the perceived stress level and its coping strategies among 1st year B.Sc. Nursing students of Arya Nursing College, Changsari with a view to develop an information booklet on management of stress.”

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- To assess the perceived stress level among 1st year B.Sc. Nursing students of Arya Nursing College, Changsari.
- To assess the coping strategies among 1st year B.Sc. Nursing students of Arya Nursing College, Changsari.
- To find out the association between perceived stress level with selected demographic variables.
- To provide an information booklet on Management of stress.

II. Material And Method

This descriptive study was carried out on 1st year B.Sc. Nursing students of Arya Nursing College at Arya Nursing College Nij – Sindhurighopa, Changsari, Kamrup (R) Guwahati, Assam from June 2021 to October 2021. Self structured questionnaire for socio-demographic data, Modified Perceived Stress Scale for assessing perceived stress level and Modified Coping Behaviour Inventory for assessing the coping strategies were used for collecting the data.

Study Design: Cross Sectional Descriptive Research Design

Study Location: Arya Nursing College, Changsari, Assam

Study Duration: 2nd June to 28th October 2021

Sample Size: 59 students

Subjects & selection method: The study population was drawn from 1st year B.Sc. Nursing students by using convenient sampling technique.

Inclusion criteria:

- Both male and female of 1st year B.Sc. Nursing students.
- Those who are present during the time of data collection.

Exclusion Criteria:

- Those who are not available during the time of data collection.
- Those who are not willing to participate.

Tools for data collection:

- The tools included were self - structured questionnaire for socio-demographic variables of the participants viz. Age (in years), Gender, Parents Occupation, Family Income (monthly), Type of Family, Selection of course, Previous experience of hostel stay, Medium of instruction in the college.
- Modified Standardized Perceived Stress scale and Modified Coping Behavior Inventory was used to assess the perceived stress level and its coping strategies. The modified Perceived Stress Level¹² consists of 18 items. The scores are obtained by response (Eg: 0 = never, 1 = infrequently, 2=sometimes, 3=frequently, 4=always) . The scores are interpreted as mild, moderate and severe. Mild ;<Mean – SD, Moderate : Mean – SD to Mean + SD, Severe : >Mean +SD.
- The modified Coping Behavior Inventory¹³ consists of 18 items. The scored are obtained as (Eg: 0 = never, 1 = infrequently, 2=sometimes, 3=frequently, 4=always). Low : <Mean – SD, Moderate: Mean – SD to Mean +SD, High : >Mean + SD. The scores are interpreted as low, moderate and high.

Ethical consideration:

- Permission was taken from Principal of Arya Nursing College, Changsari. Permission was taken from class co-coordinator of 1st year B.Sc. Nursing. Confidentiality of all participants was taken into account. Informed consent was obtained from all the participants after explaining the purpose and details of the study. Anonymity of the participants was maintained by using Code No. instead of their name.

Procedure for data collection

After obtaining informed consent, self-structured questionnaire, modified standardized questionnaires on PSS and CBI was administer to the participants. The data was collected on 8th September, 2021 for 90 mins.

Statistical analysis: Descriptive statistic methods like frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation were used to assess the perceived stress level and coping strategies. Using the Mean ± SD, the level of perceived stress and level of coping strategies were calculated. Inferential statistic like chi-square test was used to assess the association of selected variables with perceived stress level towards stress. The level of significance was set at 0.05 to interpret the findings.

III. Result:

The analysis of data is based on the objectives by using descriptive and inferential statistics.

- **Section I:** Description of study variables in frequency and percentage.
- **Section II:** Mean and Standard Deviation of perceived stress level of the 1st year B.Sc. Nursing towards stress.
- **Section III:** Mean, and Standard Deviation of coping strategies of the 1st year B.Sc. Nursing towards stress.
- **Section IV:** Chi-square for association between perceived stress level of the 1st year B.Sc. Nursing students towards stress and selected demographic variables.

SECTION I: Description of study variables in frequency and percentage.

This section deals with the distribution of sample characteristic in accordance with the socio demographic variables. This section is depicted from Figure 1.1 to 1.8.

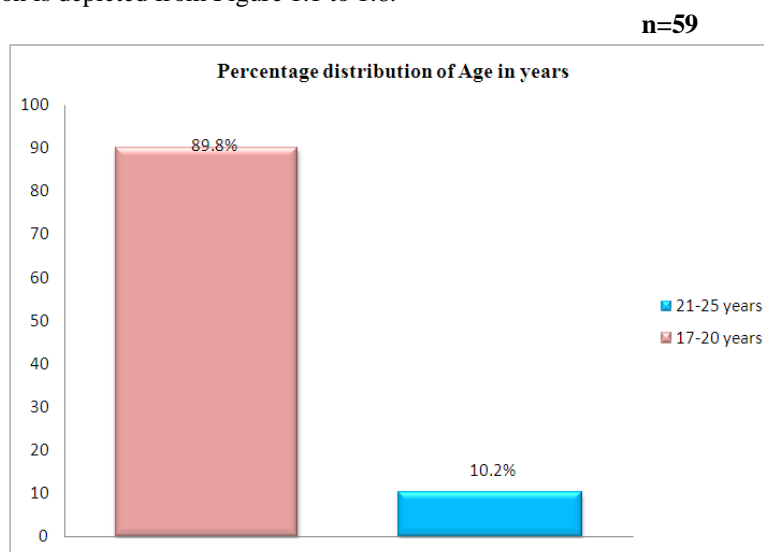


Figure 1.1: Bar diagram showing the percentage distribution according to Age (in years)

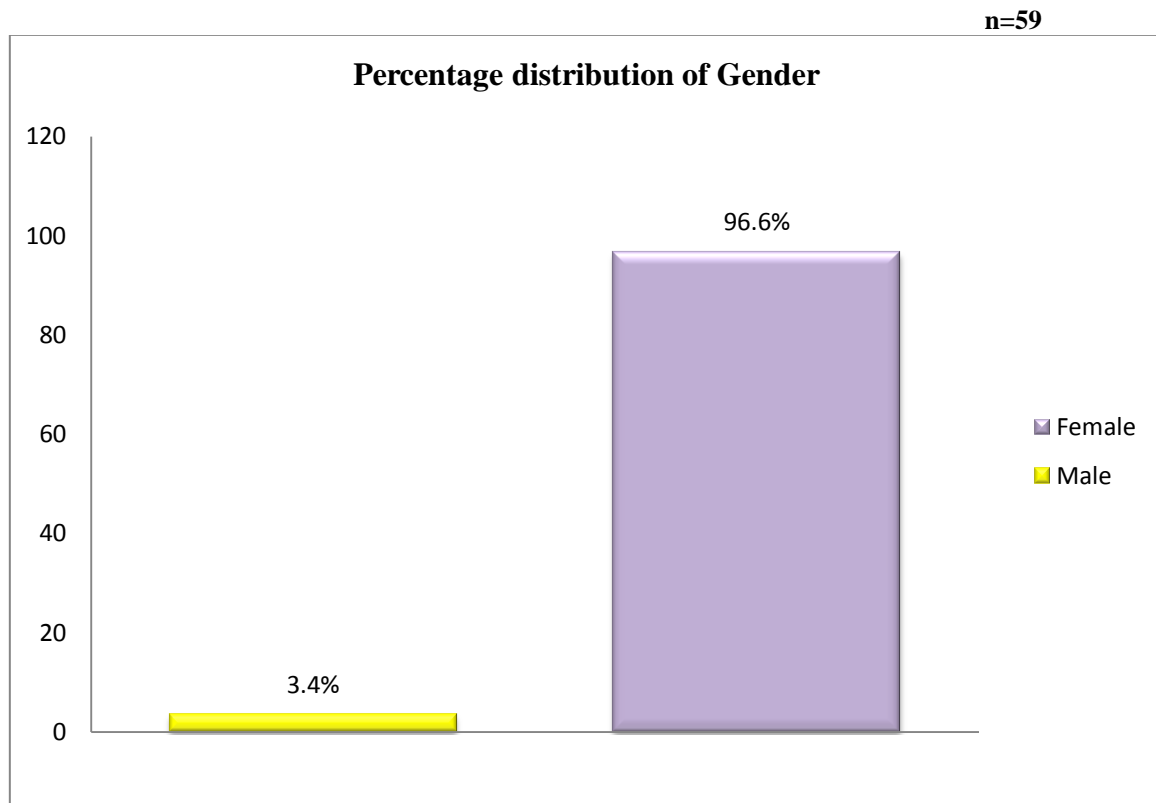


Figure 1.2: Bar diagram showing the percentage distribution according to Gender.

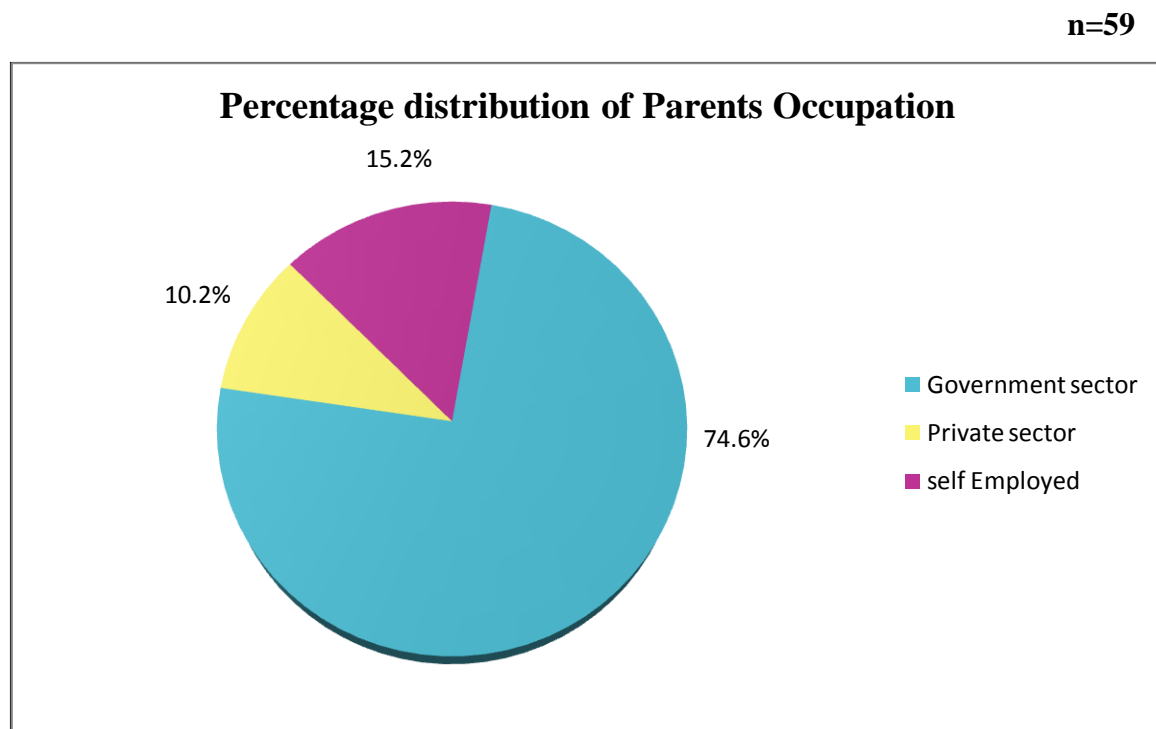


Figure 1.3: Pie diagram showing the percentage distribution of Parents Occupation.

n=59

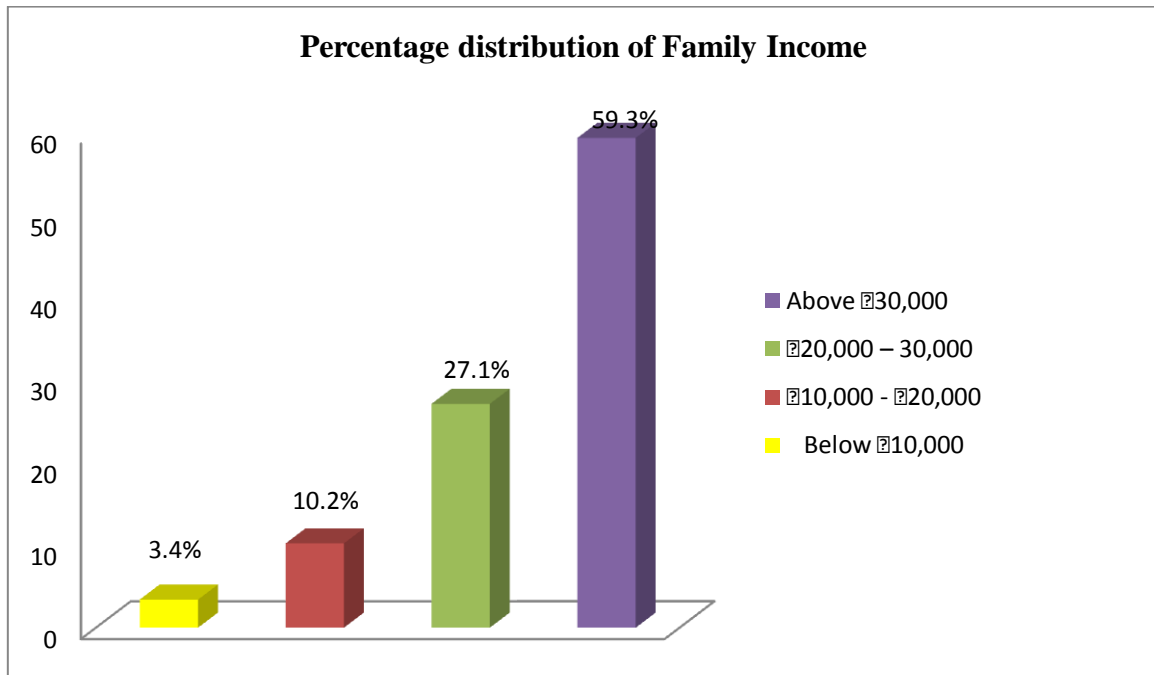


Figure 1.4: Bar diagram showing the percentage distribution of Family Income (monthly).

n=59

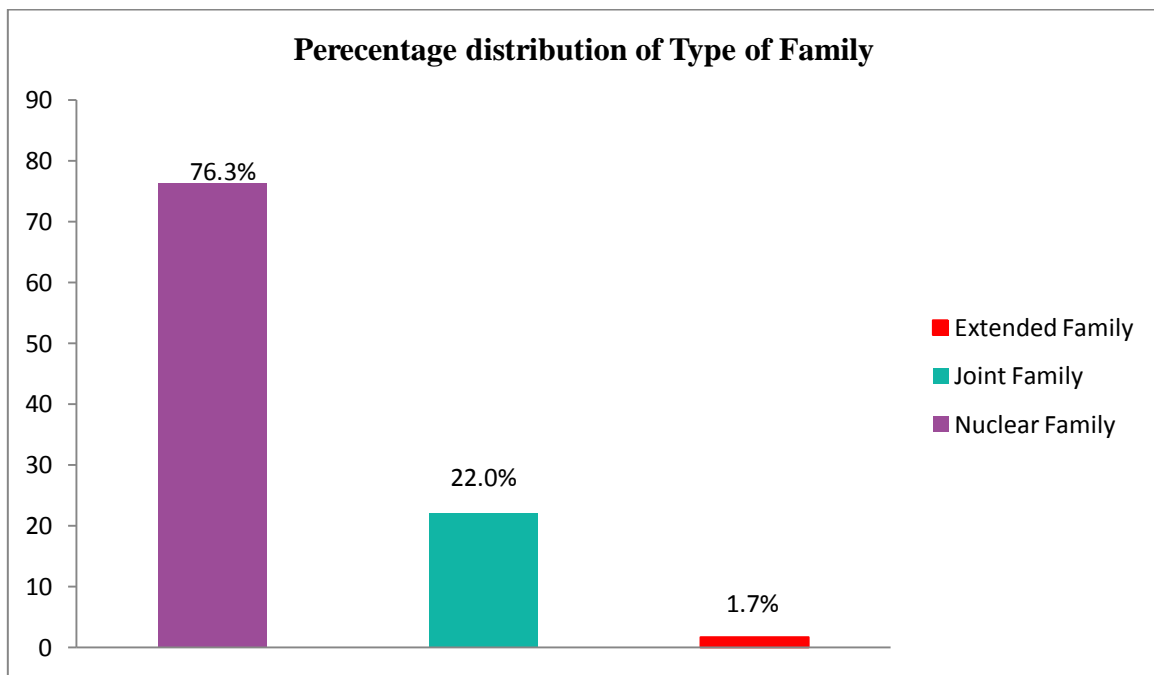


Figure 1.5: Bar diagram showing the percentage distribution of Type of Family.

n=59

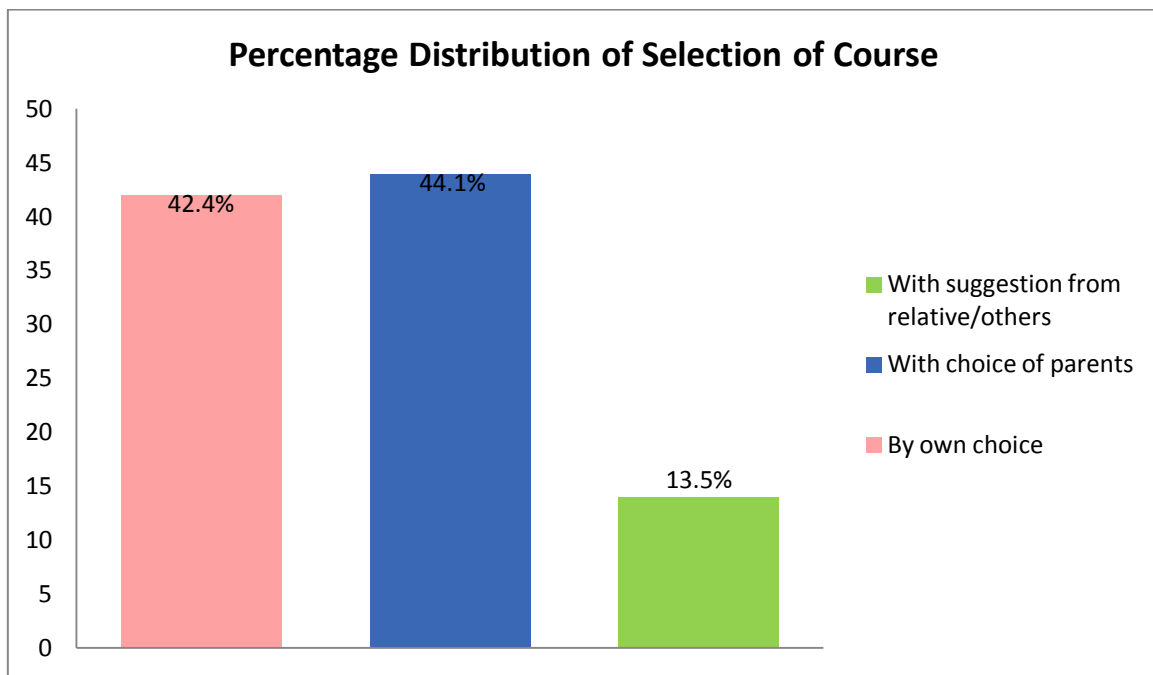


Figure 1.6: Bar diagram showing percentage of Selection of Course.

n=59

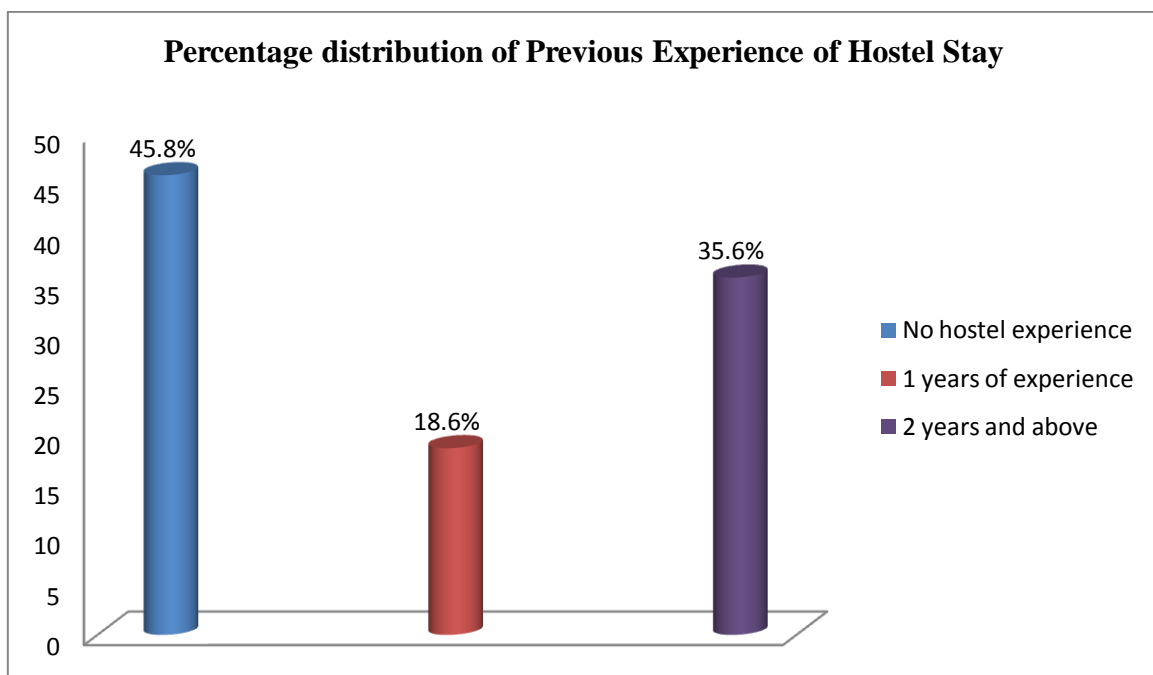


Figure 1.7: Bar diagram showing the percentage distribution of Previous Experience of Hostel Stay.

n=59

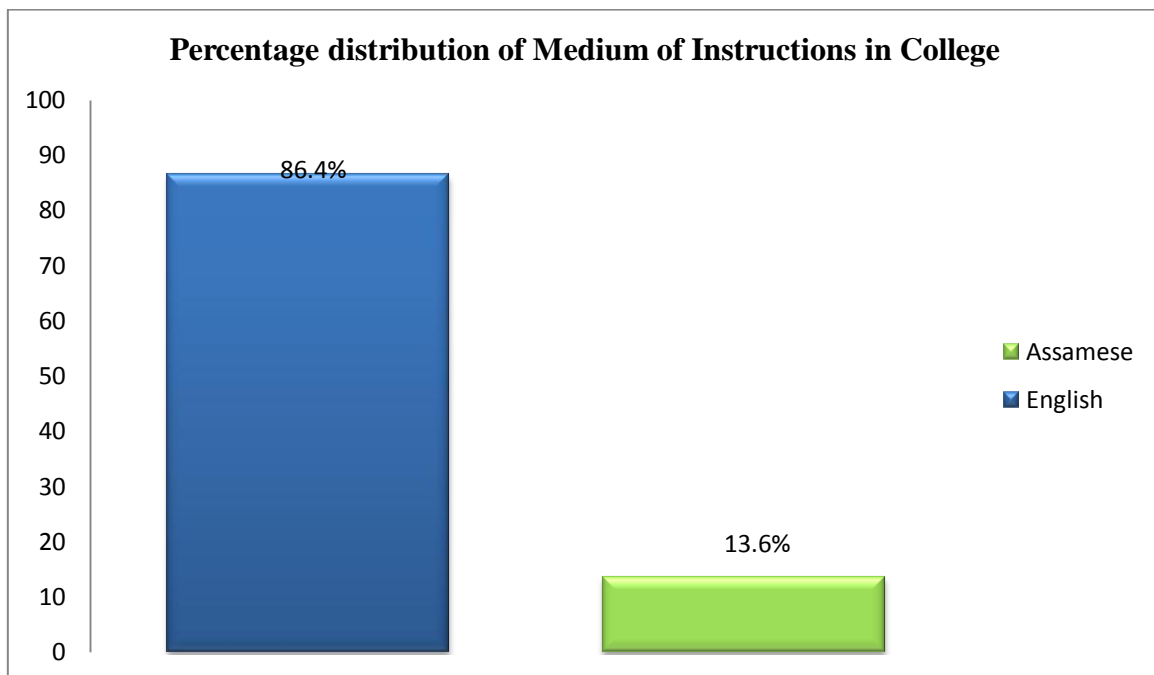


Figure 1.8: Bar diagram showing the percentage of Medium of Instructions in College.

SECTION II: ASSESSMENT OF PERCEIVED STRESS LEVEL TOWARDS STRESS

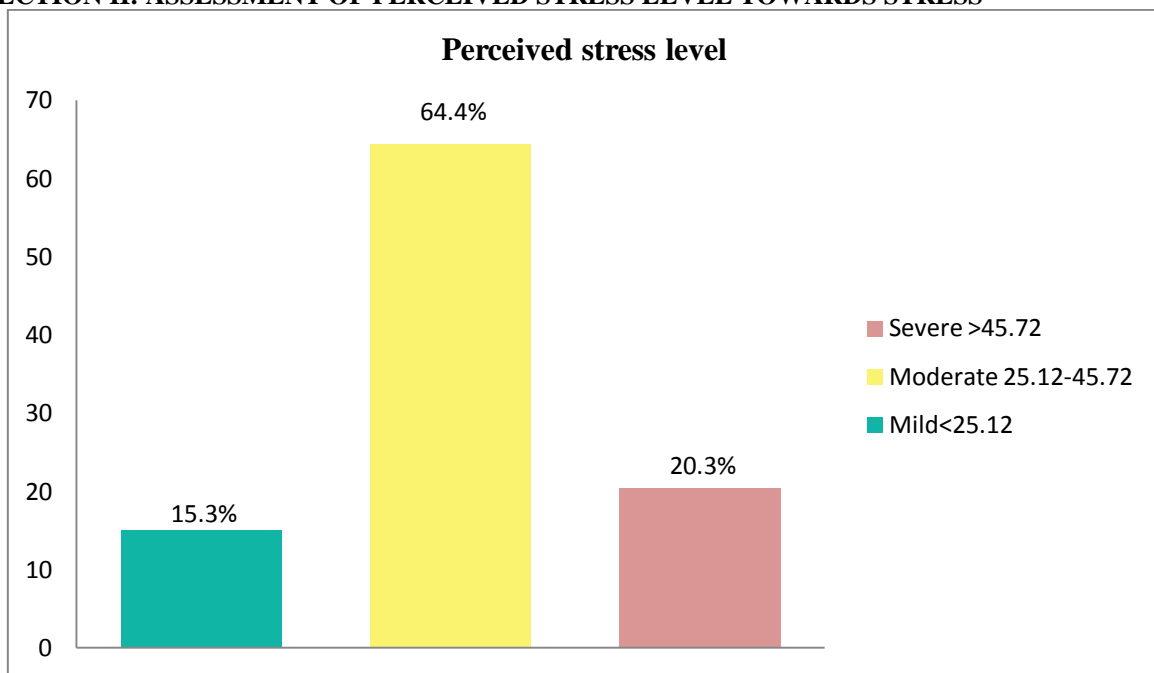


Figure 2.1: Bar diagram showing the percentage distribution of Perceived Stress level of the participants.

The data presented in the Figure 2.1 show that the mean and standard deviation of overall perceived stress level were 35.42 and 10.30 respectively.

Table 2.1 : Percentage (%) distribution regarding stress from assignment and workload, stress from lack of professional knowledge, stress from environment, stress from peers and daily life and stress from teachers in Modified Perceived Stress Scale (PSS)

PSS	Never (%)	Infrequently (%)	Sometimes (%)	Frequently (%)	Always (%)	Total (%)
Stress from assignment and workload	7	13	43	22	15	100
Stress from lack of professional knowledge	11	14	54	12	9	100
Stress from environment	12	10	39	18	21	100
Stress from peers and daily life	12	12	56	10	10	100
Stress from teachers	30	14	42	9	5	100

Stress from assignment and workload: Among 59 participants, 7 % of the participants had responded never, 13% infrequently, 43% sometimes, 22% frequently and 15% always.

Stress from lack of professional knowledge and stress: Among 59 participants, 11% of the participants responded never, 14% infrequently, 54% sometimes, 12% frequently and 9% always.

Stress from the environment: Among 59 participants, 12% of the participants responded never, 10% infrequently, 39% sometimes, 18% frequently and 21% always.

Stress from peers and daily life: Among 59 participants, 12% of the participants responded never, 12% infrequently, 56% sometimes, 10% frequently and 10% always.

Stress from teachers: Among 59 participants, 30% responded never, 14% infrequently, 42% sometimes, 9% frequently and 5% always.

SECTION III: ASSESSMENT OF COPING STRATEGIES TOWARDS STRESS

n=59

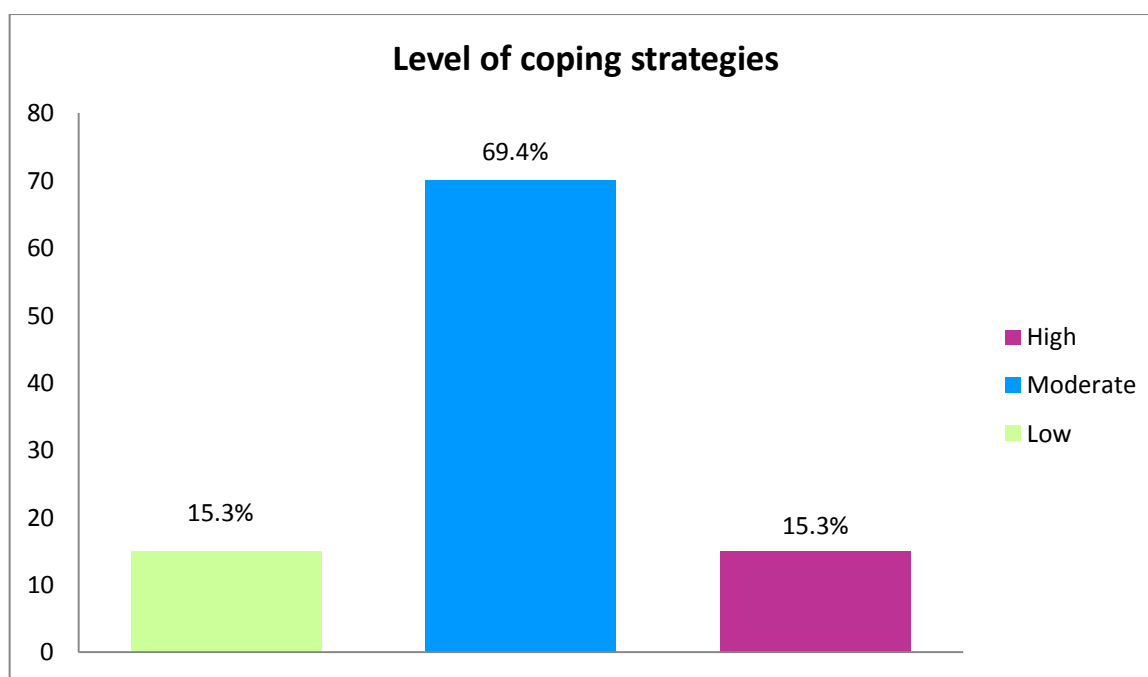


Figure 3.1: Bar diagram showing the percentage distribution of coping strategies of 1st year B.Sc. Nursing students.

The data presented in the Figure 3.1 show that the mean and standard deviation of overall level of coping strategies were 36.35 and 5.84 respectively.

CBI	Never (%)	Infrequently (%)	Sometimes (%)	Frequently (%)	Always (%)	Total (%)
Avoidance	39	15	36	7	3	100
Problem solving	6	11	40	21	22	100
Stay optimistic	3	15	36	22	24	100
Transference	9	10	42	24	15	100

Table 3.1: Percentage(%) distribution regarding avoidance ,problem solving ,stay optimistic and transference in modified Coping Behaviour Inventory (CBI)

Avoidance: Among 59 participants, 39% responded never, 15% infrequently, 36% sometimes, 7% frequently and 3% always.

Problem Solving: Among 59 participants, 6% responded never, 11% infrequently,40% sometimes, 21% frequently and 22% always.

Stay Optimistic: Among 59 participants, 3% responded never, 15% infrequently, 36% sometimes, 22% frequently and 24% always.

Transference: Among 59 participants, 9% responded never, 10% infrequently, 42% sometimes, 24% frequently and 15% always.

SECTION IV: ASSOCIATION BETWEEN PERCEIVED STRESS LEVEL WITH SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES.

Table 4.1: Association of perceived stress level with selected demographic variables. n=59

Variables	Stress Level				χ^2 Value	df	p value	Remarks
	Mild	Moderate	Severe	Total				
Age (in years)					11.79	2	5.99	S
17-20	9	33	11	53				
21-25	0	5	1	6				
Total	9	38	12	59				
Gender					1.2	2	5.99	NS
Male	0	2	0	2				
Female	9	36	12	57				
Total	9	38	12	59				
Parents Occupation					4.2	4	9.49	NS
Government Sector	7	26	11	44				
Private Sector	0	4	2	6				
Self Employed	2	7	0	9				
Total	9	37	13	59				
Family Income					8.13	6	12.59	NS
Below ₹10,000	0	2	0	2				
₹10,000- ₹20,000	0	4	2	6				
₹20,000- ₹30,000	0	12	4	16				
Above ₹30,000	8	21	6	35				
Total	8	39	12	59				
Type of Family								
Nuclear Family	7	28	10	45				
Joint Family	2	9	2	13				

Extended Family	0	0	1	1	3.79	4	9.49	NS
Total	9	37	13	59				
Selection of Course					7.48	4	9.49	NS
By own choice	2	18	5	25				
With Choice of parents	3	18	5	26				
With suggestion from relatives/ others	3	3	2	8				
Total	8	39	12	59				
Previous Experience of Hostel Stay					3.71	2	9.49	NS
No hostel experience	5	15	7	27				
1 year of experience	0	9	2	11				
2 years and above	4	14	3	21				
Total	9	38	12	59				
Medium of Instruction In College					5.09	2	5.99	NS
English	8	35	8	51				
Assamese	1	3	4	8				
Total	9	38	12	59				

- NS = Not Significant
- S = Significant

Age: The obtained chi-square value for perceived stress level and age of 1st Year B.Sc. Nursing students was 11.79 (df=2) which is >5.99 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, there is association between perceived stress and coping strategies with age.

Gender: The obtained chi-square value for perceived stress level and gender of 1st Year B.Sc. Nursing students was 1.2 (df=2) which is <5.99 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, there is no association between perceived stress and coping strategies with gender.

Parents Occupation: The obtained chi-square value for perceived stress level and parents occupation of 1st Year B.Sc. Nursing students was 4.2 (df=4) which is <9.49 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, there is no association between perceived stress and coping strategies with parents occupation.

Family Income: The obtained chi-square value for perceived stress level and family income of 1st Year B.Sc. Nursing students was 8.13 (df=6) which is <12.59 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, there is no association between perceived stress and coping strategies with family income.

Types of Family: The obtained chi-square value for perceived stress level and types of family of 1st Year B.Sc. Nursing students was 3.79 (df=4) which is <9.49 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, there is no association between perceived stress and coping strategies with types of family.

Selection of Course: The obtained chi-square value for perceived stress level and selection of course of 1st Year B.Sc. Nursing students was 7.48 (df=4) which is <9.49 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, there is no association between perceived stress and coping strategies with selection of course.

Previous Experience of Hostel Stay: The obtained chi-square value for perceived stress level and previous experience of hostel stay of 1st Year B.Sc. Nursing students was 3.71 (df=2) which is <9.49 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, there is no association between perceived stress and coping strategies with previous experience of hostel stay.

Medium of Instruction in College: The obtained chi-square value for perceived stress level and medium of instruction in college of 1st Year B.Sc. Nursing students was 5.09 (df=2) which is <5.99 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, there is no association between perceived stress and coping strategies with medium of instruction.

Therefore, the hypothesis, H₁ i.e. there is significant association between perceived stress level with selected demographic variable is accepted for age (in years) and rejected for gender, parents occupation, family income (monthly), type of family, selection of course, previous experience of hostel stay and medium of instruction in the college.

IV. Discussion

The present study was conducted to assess the Perceived Stress Level and its Coping Strategies among 1st year B.Sc. Nursing students of Arya Nursing College, Changsari with a view to develop an information booklet on management of stress. The data was collected on 8th September, 2021. Quantitative descriptive research design with convenient sampling technique was undertaken to select the sample on the basis of inclusion and exclusion criteria. During the course of literature review many books, articles and journals were searched. The findings of the study were compared and contrasted with those of other study.

The findings of the study have been discussed with reference to the objectives of the study.

- To assess the perceived stress level among 1st year B.Sc. Nursing students of Arya Nursing College, Changsari.

It has been found out that majority of the participants have moderate stress level that is 64.4%, whereas 20.3% have severe stress level and 15.3% have mild stress level. The mean and standard deviation of perceived stress level is found to be 35.42 and 10.30 respectively.

The study findings are supported by similar studies done by **Rafati F, Rafati S, KhoshnoodZ (2020)** on Perceived Stress among Iranian Nursing Students in a Clinical Learning Environment with the aim to investigate the stress perceived by Iranian nursing students in the clinical learning environment and its relationship with the characteristics of students. Based on the study results, the most stress-inducing factors for students were instructors' limited clinical competence and instructors' inappropriate conduct. The results of this study showed a moderate level of stress among the students⁶.

Whereas in the study conducted by **Abasimi E, Atindanbila S, Mahamah M.M, Gai X (2015)** on the Experience of Stress among Nursing Students in Nursing Training Colleges in Tamale, Ghana with a purpose to examine the levels and sources of stress among diploma nursing students in two nursing training colleges in Tamale, Ghana. A total of 273 State Registered Nursing, Community Health Nursing, and Midwifery students who were selected using the stratified random sampling strategy were made to complete self administered questionnaires on stressors they encounter. Results indicated that students experience severe levels of stress. They also reported significantly higher Personal stressors, followed by Academic stressors and finally Social stressors⁷.

- To assess the coping strategies among 1st year B.Sc. Nursing students of Arya Nursing College, Changsari.

It has been found out that majority of the participants have moderate coping strategies that is 69.4%, whereas 15.3% have high coping strategies and 15.3% have low coping strategies. The mean and standard deviation of coping strategies is found to be 36.35 and 5.84 respectively.

The study findings are supported by similar studies, a comparative study conducted by **A Yasodhamma (2019)** to assess the coping strategies among first year nursing students based on gender at selected institution in Chennai with an aim to assess the coping strategies among the fresher of male and female student nurses of nursing baccalaureate program at the end of the 1 year. Among 50 students, 19 (76%) of the male students and 23 (92%) of the female students were having moderately adequate level of coping strategies. 6 (24%) of the female students were having adequate level coping strategies and no one is having inadequate level of coping strategies⁸.

Whereas in the study conducted by **Ramkumar, S and Rakshita, C and Elizabeth, J and Mathews, J and Prakash, VS and Sharma, R (2011)** on Coping Ability of Medical and Nursing Students, 42 medical and 34 nursing students volunteered for the study. They were administered the BAI questionnaire and classified as good and poor adjusters based on their score. The study revealed an unsatisfactory overall coping ability to be prevalent among medical and nursing students⁹.

- To find out the association between perceived stress level with selected demographic variables.

It has been found out that there is a significant association between the perceived stress level and the demographic variables age.

The study findings were supported by similar study conducted by **Asturias N and Kerr D (2021)** on the influence of socio-demographic factors on stress and coping strategies among undergraduate nursing students where the demographic variables age is associated with the stress level¹⁰

Whereas in the study conducted by **Ribeiro FMS, Mussi F C, Pieres C GDS, Silva RMD, Mace TTSD, Santos CADST (2020)** on stress level among undergraduate nursing students related to the training phase and sociodemographic factors there is no significant association between the demographic variables and the stress level¹¹.

V. Conclusion

The present study reveals that a moderate perceived stress level and a moderate coping strategies illustrate the need for stress management programs and provisions of suitable support. Nurses should promote knowledge about stress and its management, encourage the nursing students and nurses to participate and implement stress management programs to face various challenges of the profession, develop a partnership with healthcare provider and other resources to ensure best practices of stress management, the nurse should take initiation to conduct further research regarding perceived stress level and its coping strategies.

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