

Effectiveness of Assertive Training Programme on Relieving the Academic Stress and Anxiety

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Abstract

The present study investigates the, "Effectiveness of Assertive Training Programme on, "Relieving the Academic Stress and Anxiety", among Nursing Students at a Selected Institute, Bangalore. A quasi experimental study with one group pre-test and post-test design was used to assess the Effectiveness of Assertive Training Programme. Simple random sampling was used to collect data from 30 respondents studying in various colleges of nursing Bangalore. Data was collected by using modified academic stress scale of 5 point and modified Zung's anxiety self-assessment scale of 4 points. Data was analyzed by using Paired t test. There was significant reduction of academic stress ($t = 21.04$, $p \leq 0.05$) and anxiety ($t = 18.36$, $p \leq 0.05$) among nursing students after assertive training programme. The study findings can help in designing Assertiveness training programme to improve nursing students' assertive belief and behavior, which can help the nursing students to change how they view themselves and establish self-confidence and avoid anxiety and stress.

Keywords: Academic stress and anxiety, nursing students, assertiveness training programme, nurses

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INTRODUCTION

Academic stress is a mental and emotional pressure, tension or stress that occurs due to the demands of college life. Some academic stress is normal for all college students because of the stress that comes from being exposed to new educational concepts adjusting to new social setting and taking on the larger workload. Too much academic stress can contribute to depression and physical illnesses which can in turn can negatively affect academic performance^[1].

There have been many studies which have reported strong relationship between stress and college students. Some individuals are more sensitive to some stressors than others so the person's characteristics and behavior patterns must be looked at to determine their importance and their

vulnerability to stress. Stress has been associated with major life events, daily life hurdles and changes in life^[2].

All college students face challenges such as financial restraints, challenging courses, adapting to new experiences, and peer pressure. However, nursing students may have additional stressful situations to consider. Research indicates that nursing students claim course structure, clinical experiences, and lack of support are common themes for producing stress and anxiety^[3].

Assertiveness enables to withstand the stress. Those suffering from academic stress and anxiety need to have high level of assertiveness to resist and cope successfully. Hence it was considered vital

to increase the level of assertiveness of nursing students^[4].

METHOD

This study evaluated the effectiveness of Assertive Training Programme on, "Relieving the Academic Stress and Anxiety", among Nursing Students at a Selected Institute, Bangalore. A quasi experimental research design where pre and post- test without control group approach was used to assess the effectiveness of assertiveness training programme on reduction of academic stress and anxiety among nursing students. The sample comprised of 30, 4th year nursing students selected through Simple random sampling. Nursing students who were willing to participate and present at the time of study were included in the study. The tools used for data collection consisted three sections, Personal and socio-demographic data, Modified academic stress scale consists 24 items that assess academic stress and Modified zung's anxiety scale consists 20 items that assess anxiety. The module for assertive training was developed by researchers following extensive review literature. The module for assertive training was divided into eight domains namely Bill of assertiveness rights, Formation of I-statements, Identification and discrimination of assertive, aggressive and passive behavior, How to be assertive? Barriers of assertive communication, Effective communication skills, Body language and Developing social skills. Assertive training was administered for five days, hours each day to samples immediately after pretest. Post was administered after 15 days of completion of assertive training. The data was analyzed by using both descriptive and inferential statistics

RESULTS

Description of Demographic Variables

Significant number of students were females (80%), aged 21 Years (40%) and

64% maintained paying guest status. Majority of respondent's father and mother were literates. 40% Students reason to choose nursing was job guarantee. Most respondents' leisure time activity was listening music (40%) and watching television (40%).

Distribution of the Respondents According to their Pre & Post-Test Academic Stress Score & Anxiety

Table 1: Distribution of the Respondents According to their Pre-Test Academic Stress Score.

Level of Stress	Frequency	Percentage
Less Stress	5	16.66
Average Stress	4	13.34
More Stress	21	70.00
Total	30	100

Table 1 shows majority 70% of respondents have more stress, 13.34% have average stress and 16.66% have less stress.

Table 2: Distribution of the Respondents According to their Pre-Test Anxiety Score.

Level of Anxiety	Frequency	Percentage
Normal Range	0	0
Moderate Anxiety	5	16.6
Severe anxiety	4	13.4
Extreme anxiety	21	70.0
Total	30	100

Table 2 shows majority 70% of respondents have extreme anxiety, 16.6% have moderate anxiety and 13.4% have severe anxiety.

Table 3: Distribution of the Respondents According to their Post-Test Academic Stress Score.

Level of Stress	Frequency	Percentage
Less	18	60.00
Average	7	23.33
More	5	16.67
Total	30	100

Table 3 shows majority 60% of respondents have less stress, 23.33% have

average stress and 16.67% have more stress.

Table 4 shows majority 76.6% of respondents have normal range of anxiety, 16.6% have moderate anxiety and 6.2 % have severe anxiety.

Table 4: Distribution of the Respondents According to their Post-Test Anxiety Score.

Level of Anxiety	Frequency	Percentage
Normal Range	23	76.6
Moderate Anxiety	5	16.6
Severe anxiety	2	6.2
Extreme anxiety	0	0
Total	30	100

Effectiveness of Assertive Training Programme

Table 5: Pre and Post-Test Scores of Academic Stress and Anxiety of Respondents.

	Academic stress Score(N=30)			Anxiety Score (N=30)		
	Mean	SD	t -Value	Mean	SD	t -Value
Pre-test	76.07	32.02		46.29	18.12	
Post-test	53.63	21.61	21.40*	33.33	12.62	18.36

*significant at $P \leq 0.05$

**highly significant at $P \leq 0.01$

***very high significant at $P \leq 0.001$

Table 5 shows that the calculated „t“ value was found to be 18.36, which is found to be significant at 0.05 level.

Correlation between Academic Stress and Anxiety (Post-Test)

Table 6: Correlation Between Academic Stress and Anxiety (Post Test).

Correlation between	Mean score Mean±SD	Karl Pearson correlation coefficient	Interpretation
Academic Stress	53.63±21.61	r = 0.47 P=0.001***	Significant, moderate, positive Correlation
Anxiety	33.33 ±12.62		

Table 6 shows significant, moderate, positive correlation between academic stress and anxiety

DISCUSSION

The study aimed at assessing effectiveness of assertive training in reducing academic stress and anxiety and assertive training programme was designed for the same purpose. This study is limited to 30 samples^[4].

The study revealed that nursing students suffer from significant amount of academic stress and anxiety. In pre-test,

academic stress level, 70% of respondents had more stress, 13.34% had average stress, and 16.66% had less stress. These findings are similar to the findings of a study conducted in Ireland which shows student nurses are having academic stress^[4-5].

In pre-test, anxiety level, 70% of respondents had extreme anxiety, 16.6% had moderate anxiety and 13.4% had severe anxiety. These findings are substantiated by the study conducted in Iranian University among the nursing students revealed that the existence of

anxiety in nursing students lead to the disruption of study performance^[5].

Assertive training programme was found to be very effective in reducing academic stress and anxiety. In post-test, academic stress level, 60% of respondents had less stress, 23.33% had average stress, and 16.67% had more stress. The calculated “t” value was found to be 21.04 (mean pre-test academic stress score was 76.07 with S.D 32.02 & mean post-test academic stress score was 53.63 with S.D 21.61), which is found to be significant at 0.05 level. There exist a significant difference between pre-test and post-test academic stress score which shows reduction of academic stress after Assertiveness training programme. These findings are supported by the study conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of assertiveness training on level of stress experienced by student nurses in Taiwan in which the results shows that assertiveness training is effective in reducing academic stress.

The study findings can help in designing Assertiveness training programme to improve nursing students’ assertive belief and behavior, which can help the nursing students to change how they view themselves and establish self-confidence and avoid anxiety and academic stress^[6].

CONCLUSION

It is evident from the study academic stress and anxiety is present among nursing students. It must be reduced before it can contribute to depression and physical illnesses which can in turn can negatively affect academic performance. The study found Assertive training is very beneficial and effective in reducing stress and anxiety. Assertiveness boosts confidence of students to perform better in academics as well in real life.

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