

A Cross-Sectional Study to Assess the Emotional Empathy, Emotional Intelligence, and Higher Education-Related Stress among Nursing Students of SGT University, Gurugram

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Abstract

Background: Nursing education is rigorous and demanding, often placing significant stress on students. Emotional empathy and emotional intelligence are crucial components for nursing professionals, influencing their ability to provide compassionate care and effectively manage stress. Understanding the emotional dynamics and stressors within nursing education can inform interventions promoting student well-being and academic success.

Title: A Cross-sectional study to assess the emotional empathy, emotional intelligence and higher education-related stress among Nursing students of SGT University Gurugram.

Objectives: This cross-sectional study aimed to explore potential correlations between emotional empathy, emotional intelligence, and higher education-related stress among nursing students.

Methods & Materials: This cross-sectional study assessed emotional empathy, emotional intelligence, and education-related stress among 200 nursing undergraduates at SGT University using convenience sampling. Data were collected via self-administered questionnaires, including validated scales. Analysis was conducted using SPSS with descriptive statistics and chi-square tests. Ethical approval and informed consent were obtained, ensuring participant confidentiality and voluntary participation.

Result: The investigation found that most nursing students had average emotional empathy (161 students, 80.5%) and average emotional intelligence (161 students, 80.5%), along with a high level of stress (151 students, 75.1%). Specifically, 161 students (80.5%) showed average emotional intelligence, 6 students (3%) had poor emotional intelligence, and 53 students (16.5%) had good emotional intelligence. Regarding stress levels, no students (0%) experienced low stress, 49 students (24.5%) had moderate stress, and 151 students (75.1%) reported stress related to higher education.

Conclusion: This study contributes to the understanding of emotional empathy, emotional intelligence, and higher education-related stress among nursing students at SGT University, Gurugram. The findings highlight the importance of addressing the emotional well-being of nursing students, as it directly impacts their ability to provide quality patient care and cope with the demands of their academic and clinical training.

Keywords: Skill Based Training, Competencies, Nursing Students,

1. INTRODUCTION

Nursing education is a rigorous and evolving process designed to equip individuals with the knowledge and skills required to meet the demands of modern healthcare. It integrates a broad curriculum that combines theoretical foundations with practical experience, ensuring that students are prepared to deliver high-quality patient care across various settings. In the contemporary healthcare environment, nurses play a critical role in providing holistic care that addresses not only physical health but also the emotional and psychological needs of patients. Consequently, nursing education is not limited to developing clinical

skills but also aims to cultivate qualities such as empathy and emotional intelligence—both of which are vital for effective patient care. Emotional empathy and emotional intelligence are two essential attributes in the formation of compassionate and competent nursing professionals. Emotional empathy, defined as the ability to understand and share the feelings of others, is crucial for building meaningful connections with patients and colleagues. This skill allows nurses to provide patient-centered care by responding to the emotional needs of those under their care. On the other hand, emotional intelligence involves the ability to perceive, comprehend, and manage one's own emotions as well as those of others. Nurses with higher emotional intelligence demonstrate improved communication skills, empathy, and adaptability, which are essential for establishing therapeutic relationships and fostering teamwork in healthcare settings.

Background of the study:

Research indicates that nursing students with higher levels of emotional empathy demonstrate greater patient satisfaction and engagement in patient-centered care⁶. However, the development of emotional empathy in nursing students may be influenced by various factors, including educational experiences, clinical exposure, and individual characteristics. Emotional intelligence (EI) encompasses the ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and express emotions effectively⁸. In the context of nursing education, EI is considered crucial for facilitating adaptive coping strategies, managing interpersonal relationships, and promoting professional competence⁹. Nursing students with higher levels of EI are more likely to demonstrate resilience in the face of academic challenges, communicate effectively with patients and colleagues, and provide compassionate care. Higher education-related stress can have detrimental effects on the physical, emotional, and academic well-being of nursing students, leading to burnout, anxiety, and reduced academic performance¹³. The sources of stress in nursing education are multifaceted and may include workload pressures, time constraints, fear of failure, and interpersonal conflicts. A study by Rezaei S et al (2019) found that 58.3% of nursing and midwifery students experienced moderate to high levels of academic burnout. Emotional exhaustion was reported by 63.7% of students, with a mean score of 3.45 out of 5 on the emotional exhaustion subscale, indicating a significant impact of academic stress. Another study by Rios Riquez et al (2016) showed that 54% of nursing students experienced high levels of stress related to patient care, leading to burnout in 48% of the participants. The mean score for burnout was 2.89 on a scale of 1 to 5, with stress from patient care responsibilities being the most significant predictor of burnout.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Study Design: Cross-sectional study design was used to assess emotional empathy, emotional intelligence, and higher education-related stress among nursing students at SGT University, Gurugram.

Study Population: The study population will consist of undergraduate nursing students currently enrolled at SGT University, Gurugram.

The inclusion criteria will be:

- Students aged 17 to 24 years old are enrolled.
- Participants must have proficiency in English or Hindi to complete the survey.
- Students who consent to participate in the study with their parent permission.

Exclusion criteria will include:

- Nursing students on a leave of absence during the data collection period.
- Students who do not consent to participate.
- Students who are below 17 Years will be excluded.
- Those who are mentally unfit, disability, or have any other abnormality

Sampling Technique: A Convenience sampling technique will be employed to ensure representation across the first year of study.

Sample Size: A sample size of approximately 200 students will be targeted to ensure statistical significance.

Data Collection Tools

Data will be collected using a structured self-administered questionnaire, consisting of four sections:

- **Demographic Information:** This section will gather basic demographic data such as age, gender, year of study, and academic performance.

- **Emotional Empathy:** Emotional empathy will be measured using the Balanced Emotional Empathy Scale, which assesses the extent to which individuals respond emotionally to others' experiences.

S.NO	CATEGORY	SCORE
1	POOR	30-70
2	AVERAGE	70-110
3	GOOD	111-150

- **Emotional Intelligence:** The Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire-Short Form will be used to assess the emotional intelligence of the participants. It includes subscales for well-being, self-control, emotionality, and sociability.

S.NO	CATEGORY	SCORE
1	POOR	19-44
2	AVERAGE	45-70
3	GOOD	90-95

- **Higher Education-related Stress:** The Higher Education Stress Inventory (HESI) will be used to measure stress levels related to academic demands, peer pressure, and personal factors.

S.NO	CATEGORY	SCORE
1	LOW STRESS	0-38
2	MODERATE STRESS	39-77
3	HIGHER STRESS	78-116

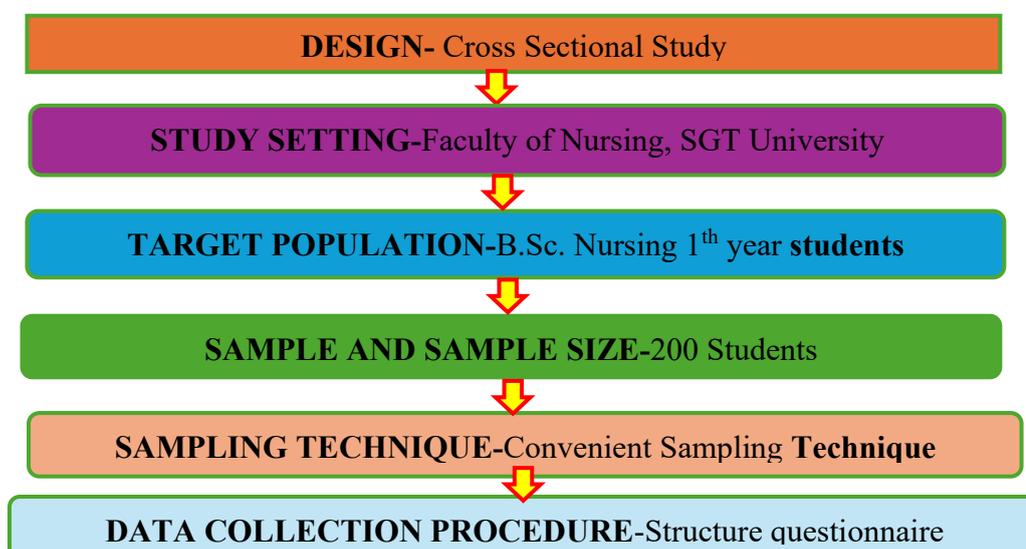
Data Collection Procedure

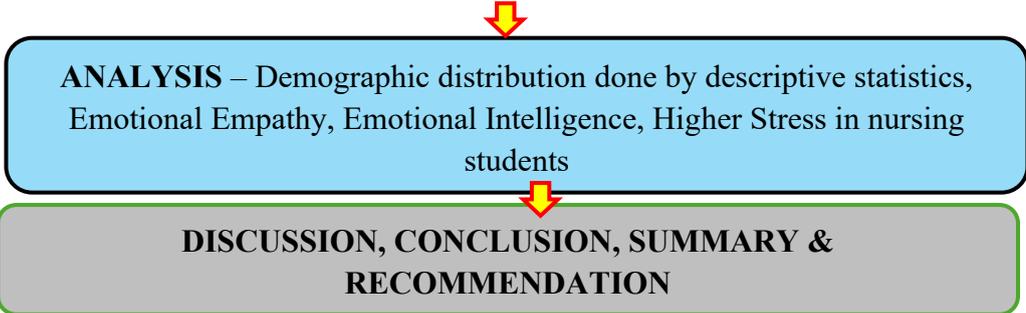
The data collection will be conducted over one month. Participants will be informed about the study's purpose, procedures, and their rights as participants, including confidentiality and the voluntary nature of participation. After obtaining informed consent, the questionnaire will be distributed to the students during their class hours. Completed questionnaires will be collected on the same day to minimize non-response bias.

Ethical Considerations

The study will be conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the Declaration of Helsinki. Approval will be obtained from the Institutional Ethics Committee of SGT University before the commencement of the study. All participants will be required to sign an informed consent form. The anonymity and confidentiality of the participants will be strictly maintained, and the data will be used solely for research purposes.

Schematic Representation of Research Methodology





3. RESULT

Data collection had done from 200 students of Basic B.Sc. Nursing 1st Semester. After organizing, coding, and computing the complete data set, it was summarized and then transmitted to the master data sheet for analysis. By using the appropriate statistical formula for data interpretation, the data was assessed in compliance with the objectives of the study as indicated.

Objective 1: Description of the Selected Baseline Data of The Study Participants.

Table No. 1 Frequency and Percentage distribution of students of the study participants. N=200

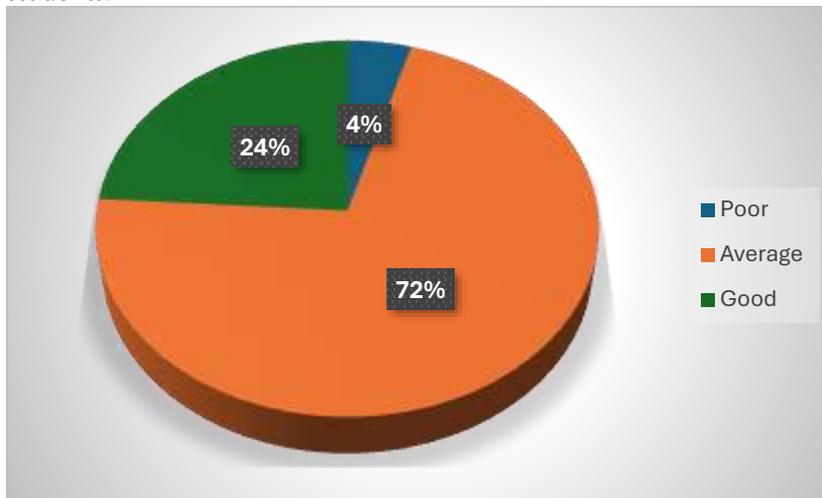
S No	Demographic variable	Frequency	Percentage
1	Age	17-20	60.5
		20-24	36.0
		More than 24	3.5
2	Gender	Male	32.5
		Female	65.5
		Other	0
3	Income	< 1 lakh	24.5
		2-3 Lakh	36.5
		> 3 lakh	39.0
4	Hours Spent For Studying	< 2 Hrs	43.0
		3-4 Hrs	42.0
		>7 Hrs	14.7
5	Hours Of Sleep/Night	<2 Hrs	3.5
		3-4 Hrs	39.0
		> 7 Hrs	57.2
6	Number Of Family Members	1 Individual	2.0
		2 Individual	5.5
		3 Individual	22.0
		4 Individual	70.5

7	Residence	Rural	57	28.5
		Urban	110	55.0
		Semiurban	33	16.5

The study revealed the following details about the student respondents: Among the 121 individuals (60.5%) in the age distribution, most were aged 17 to 20. Additionally, 72 students (36.0%) were between 20 and 24 years old, and 7 students (3.5%) were over 24. Females comprised the majority with 135 students (65.5%), while males accounted for 65 (32.5%). Regarding study habits, most students (86, 43%) studied less than two hours, followed by 84 students (42%) studying three to four hours, and 30 students (14.7%) studying more than seven hours. In terms of sleep, 115 students (57.2%) slept more than seven hours, whereas 7 students (3.5%) slept less than two hours.

Objective 2: To Assess The Levels Of Emotional Empathy Among Nursing students.

Figure 1. Frequency and Percentage of Multi-Dimensional Emotional Empathy Scale among nursing students.



According to figure 2, 143 students (71.5%) exhibited average emotional empathy, 48 students (24.0%) shown good emotional empathy, and 9 students (4.5%) demonstrated weak emotional empathy.

Objective 3- To Assess the Emotional Intelligence Among Nursing Students.

Figure 2 Frequency and Percentage of Self-Rated Emotional Scale-Revised among nursing students



Figure 2 shows that 161 students (80.5%) have average emotional intelligence, 6 students (3%) have poor emotional intelligence, and 53 students (16.5%) have good emotional intelligence.

Objective 3- To Assess The Stressors Related To High Education Experienced Among Nursing Students

Figure 3 Frequency and Percentage of Perceived Stress Scale among nursing students

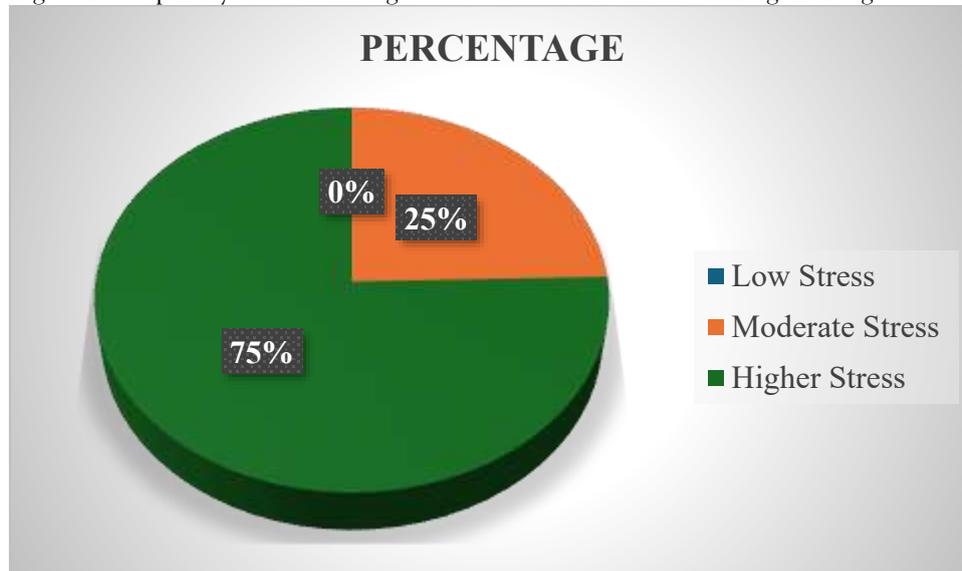


Figure 3 shows that, among nursing students, 0 students (or 0% of the sample) had low stress based on the perceived stress scale, 49 students (24.5%) had moderate stress, and 151 students (75.1%) had stress connected to higher education.

4. DISCUSSION

The objective of the current study was to assess the Emotional Empathy, Emotional Intelligence and Higher Education-Related Stress in Nursing students of SGT University Gurugram. Findings were discussed based on different review of literature with reference of the study findings. The discussion was prepared under the following subsequent headings.

Objective 1: Assess the level of Multi-Dimensional Emotional Empathy Scale among nursing students

The present study depicts that majority the nursing students, had average emotional Empathy 143(71.5%), while other nursing students had poor and good emotional Empathy that is 4.5% & 24% respectively.

My study is conducted with the **Sukhpal Kaur, Sushma Sain, Indrajit Waia, (2018)** conducted the study to assess the level of empathy among the nursing students during their internship. It was a descriptive design. 46 participants were carried out at a nursing. Consequently, the results show that the proportion of participants exhibiting high levels of empathy increased from 23.9% at the start of the internship to 29.6% at the halfway point and 28.3% at the conclusion; however, this rise was not statistically significant ($P > 0.01$).⁽¹⁾

My study is conducted with the **Mrs. Jessa George, Manoj Kumar L, Libina Babu, (2016)** conducted the cross-sectional to assess the emotional empathy among nursing students. 197 nursing students were selected through total enumerated sampling technique. The data was collected through multi-dimensional emotional empathy scale. As a result, finding indicates that there was high empathy among nursing student that is 55.3% respectively and there was no association find between the Scio demographic variables.⁽²⁾

Objective 2: Assess the level of Self-Rated Emotional Scale-Revised among nursing students.

The present study finding showed that majority of nursing students had average emotional intelligence score 161 (80.5%), while other nursing students had poor and good emotional intelligence that is 3% & 16.5% respectively.

My study is conducted with the **Prasanth E. S, Ajay R Manoj, et.al (2024)** conducted the study to determine the level of emotional intelligence in nursing students in selected college, Thrissur. through purposive sampling technique 180 nursing students was selected. The result finding indicates that 52 people (88.88%) had low emotional intelligence, 46 people (25.55%) had moderate emotional intelligence, 41 people (22.77%) had very low emotional intelligence, 22 people (12,23%) had high emotional intelligence, and 19 people (10.57%) had very high emotional intelligence respectively. ⁽³⁾

My study is conducted with the **Jeshma joseph, et.al. (2023)** conducted the study to assess the level of emotional intelligence among college student 100 nursing students was selected through convenient sampling technique The study's key finding was that, when it came to demographic factors, 76% of nursing students had high emotional intelligence and 24% had average ability. ⁽⁴⁾

Objective 3: Assess the level of Perceived Stress Scale among nursing students.

The present study finding showed that majority of nursing students had high level of stress score 151 (75.1%), while only 24.5% had moderate level of stress.

My study is conducted with the **Suvitha, Rishiyadharshinet.al, (2023)** conducted quantitative study to assess the level of perceived stress among the college students. Through purposive sampling technique 120 sample was selected using perceived stress scale questionnaire. As a result, showed that the majority of the 120 students—92, respectively 76.7%—have moderate stress, followed by low stress (17, respectively 14.2%) and severe stress (11, or 9.2%).

Recommendations:

The current study has opened avenues for future research in the following ways

- 1.A larger study sample can replicate the similar study.
- 2.Similar studies can be conducted to assess level of stress and the coping strategies among nursing student.
- 3.A comparative study can be done between 1years BSc nursing students and final year nursing student.
- 4.Quasi Experimental study with counselling sessions for adolescents and parents

5. CONCLUSION

The need for this study arises from the critical role that emotional empathy and emotional intelligence play in the nursing profession. Nursing students, who are future healthcare providers, must develop these qualities to effectively care for patients. However, the demanding nature of nursing education often leads to high levels of stress, which can negatively impact students' emotional well-being and academic performance.

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