

Management of Test Anxiety and Stress among Nursing Students through Cognitive Behaviour Therapy

Abstract

Stress is a prevalent and serious problem among nursing students, affecting their mental and physical health, academic achievement, and future jobs. Nursing education is noted for its severe standards, which include substantial curriculum burdens, rotations in the clinic, and the need to reconcile academic knowledge with practical abilities. Excessive stress can significantly impact nursing students test anxiety and achievement motivation, hindering their ability to concentrate on test questions and remember previously acquired knowledge. Although mild stress can provide a motivational boost, it is essential to prevent burnout and a loss of drive caused by excessive stress. As a nursing student, it's imperative to understand how test anxiety and stress can impede academic achievement. This study extensively analyzed the efficacy of cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) in managing test anxiety and stress and in enhancing achievement motivation. The study's sample size comprised one hundred and fifty (150) students. One hundred and fifty first-year nursing students were selected using the purposive sample method for a study on Test anxiety, Stress, and Achievement motivation. To gather data, the students completed the exam anxiety measure developed by Sharma in 2000, the students stress scale created by Agrawal M in 2012, and the achievement motivation scale created by Bhargava in 2009. After careful analysis, 52 students met the requirements and agreed to participate in the study, which underwent Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) for one month on alternate days for two hours each session. The students underwent reassessment using the same set of questionnaires, with a one-month time interval, and were reassessed again for the follow-up phase. The CBT program targeted maladaptive behaviour, frequent minor exam practices, mindful reading, cognitive rehearsal, thought stopping, breathing exercises, balloon blowing, emotion regulation, auto-suggestions, self-monitoring, role-play/modelling, Guided Imagery, videos on motivational talks, SWOT Analysis, cognitive rehearsal, Journaling/Daily log. The study observed three phases: before, after, and follow-up. The calculations were done using Mean, Standard Deviation, Repeated Measures ANOVA, and the Bonferroni Post Hoc Test. The results indicate that there were significant reduction in test anxiety, stress, and significant improvement in achievement motivation after the intervention. Cognitive Behaviour Therapy was found to be effective on managing test anxiety and stress and in enhancing achievement motivation.