

# SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

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In recent years, it is widely witnessed that a large number of nursing students suffer from emotional and mental health problems. Though several studies have indicated that stress is an important problem in nursing students, there is a dearth of studies that explore the anxiety and adjustment problems in them. Considerable information is available on the adjustment problems of first-year university students in developed countries but comparatively little is known about such problems in Asia, especially in India.

Nursing students find it difficult adjusting to the challenges they face during training. To play their roles effectively, they must have good physical and psychological functioning. It was found from the earlier researches that the psychological intervention called, Positive Therapy, developed by Hemalatha Natesan (2004) was very effective in managing anxiety and enhancing adjustment in varied sample. Hence, the action research on, 'Management of anxiety and enhancement of adjustment in nursing students through Positive Therapy' was conducted.

The objectives of the research were as follows:

- To assess the level of anxiety of nursing students
- To help the sample manage their anxiety through Positive Therapy
- To identify the causes and effects of anxiety of the sample
- To assess the sample's overall adjustment and adjustment in different areas
- To find out the efficacy of Positive Therapy in the enhancement of overall adjustment and adjustment in different areas
- To identify the negative emotions and symptoms of the sample
- To find out the relationship between adjustment and anxiety

Seventy nine female nursing students from Avinashilingam Jan Shikshan Sansthan, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India, were selected by Purposive Sampling. They were in the age range of 20-35 years. Many of them were from nuclear family (73%) and most of them were unmarried (91%). All the subjects had completed XII standard before joining the Nursing course. Majority of them were staying in hostel (87%).

To begin with, the Case Study Schedule, MAI (Manifest Anxiety Inventory) and Bell's Adjustment Inventory were administered on 125 female nursing students. Out of them, 79 students with 'High anxiety' and/or 'Unsatisfactory adjustment' were selected for the action research. They were divided into 4 batches of around 20 subjects in each batch. The subjects in all the 4 batches were given the psychological intervention called, Positive Therapy.

Positive Therapy is a package evolved by Hemalatha Natesan, based on the Eastern techniques of Yoga and Western techniques of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy. It has 4 strategies namely, Relaxation Therapy, Counselling, Exercises and Behavioural Assignments. Relaxation Therapy involves three steps, Deep Breathing Practice, Relaxation Training and Auto Suggestion. Counselling consists of Rational Emotive Therapy, Thought Stopping, Symptom Stopping, Cognitive Restructuring and Assertiveness Training. In the present study, Rational Emotive Therapy, Thought Stopping and Cognitive Restructuring were used. Exercises include Tension Releasing Exercise, Smile Therapy and Laugh Therapy. Behavioural Assignments were given to have continuity in the therapy. As the subjects of this study were students, techniques to improve their concentration, memory and performance were also given as Behavioural Assignments.

Positive Therapy was given for 6 sessions in a week to all the subjects in the 4 batches. The duration of each session was 50 minutes. Some of the subjects were provided with Audio Cassettes on Relaxation Therapy to help them practice the same at home. The subjects were asked to read the Positive Therapy – Hand Book, as Bibliotherapy.

After 6 sessions of Positive Therapy, the entire sample was re-assessed twice using the Case Study Re-assessment Schedule, Manifest Anxiety Inventory and Bell's Adjustment Inventory. Assessment II was done immediately after Positive Therapy and Assessment III was done 4 weeks after Positive Therapy. The experimental design employed in this research was 'Before and after treatment without control group'.

## **CONCLUSION**

- Initially, an alarmingly high percentage of the sample, who were nursing students, experienced 'Very High'/'High' anxiety. Therefore, the null hypothesis, 'The level of anxiety of nursing students is not high' is rejected.
- After Positive Therapy, anxiety in most of the subjects had come down to 'Low'/'Very Low' levels.
- The difference in mean anxiety between the 3 assessments (Before, After and Follow-up) is significant at 0.01 level. So, the null hypothesis, 'Positive Therapy does not help in the management of anxiety of nursing students' is rejected.
- The most important causes of anxiety were difficulty of the course, periodical tests, insecurity about future, seeing blood and financial problems.
- The effects of anxiety in most of the subjects were poor performance, failure in exams, absenteeism and headache.

- Initially, none of the subjects had ‘Excellent’/‘Good’ overall adjustment; in fact, many of them had ‘Very Unsatisfactory’/‘Unsatisfactory’ overall adjustment. Hence, the null hypothesis, ‘Nursing students have good overall adjustment’ is rejected.
- However, after Positive Therapy, majority of the sample developed ‘Good’ overall adjustment.
- The mean overall adjustment in Assessment I (Before Positive Therapy) was ‘Unsatisfactory’, whereas in Assessments II (After Positive Therapy) and III (Follow-up), they were enhanced to ‘Average’ and ‘Good’ respectively. The mean differences in overall adjustment between the three assessments are statistically significant at 0.01 level. So, the null hypothesis, ‘Positive Therapy will not be effective in enhancing the overall adjustment of nursing students’ is rejected.
- Many of the subjects had ‘Very Unsatisfactory’/‘Unsatisfactory’ home adjustment before Positive Therapy. The null hypothesis, ‘The home adjustment of nursing students is good’ is therefore rejected.
- After Positive Therapy, majority of the subjects developed ‘Good’/‘Excellent’ home adjustment.
- The mean home adjustment in Assessment II was enhanced to ‘Average’ and in Assessment III to ‘Good’. Hence, the null hypothesis, ‘Positive Therapy will not help in enhancing the home adjustment of nursing students’ is rejected.
- Before intervention, majority of the sample had ‘Unsatisfactory’/‘Very Unsatisfactory’ health adjustment and so, the null hypothesis, ‘Nursing students have good health adjustment’ is rejected.

- It is interesting to note that majority of the sample developed ‘Good’/‘Excellent’ health adjustment after intervention.
- The differences between the mean health adjustment in the 3 assessments are statistically significant at 0.01 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis, ‘Positive Therapy will not help in enhancing the health adjustment of nursing students’ is rejected.
- Before intervention, the level of social adjustment was ‘Unsatisfactory’/‘Very Unsatisfactory’ in many of the sample due to which, the null hypothesis, ‘Nursing students have good social adjustment’ is rejected.
- It is amazing to note that after intervention, many of the sample developed ‘Excellent’/‘Good’ social adjustment.
- The mean social adjustment, which was ‘Average’, changed to ‘Good’ after Positive Therapy, leading to reject the null hypothesis, ‘Positive Therapy will not help in enhancing the social adjustment of nursing students’.
- None of the subjects had ‘Excellent’ emotional adjustment, initially. Majority of them had ‘Unsatisfactory’/‘Very Unsatisfactory’ emotional adjustment. As a result, the null hypothesis, ‘The emotional adjustment of nursing students is good’ is rejected.
- It is very convincing to find that the emotional adjustment of majority of the sample improved to ‘Good’/‘Excellent’ in the re-assessments.
- Before Positive Therapy, the mean emotional adjustment was ‘Unsatisfactory’, which rose to ‘Good’ after Positive Therapy, helping to reject the null hypothesis, ‘Positive Therapy will not help in enhancing the emotional adjustment of nursing students’.

- Majority of the sample reported experiencing confusion, tiredness and headache. However, the symptoms reduced in many of the sample as a result of Positive Therapy.
- The sample also suffered from negative emotions such as worry, fear and anger. There is a drastic reduction in the number of subjects experiencing negative emotions after Positive Therapy.
- There is a significant correlation between anxiety and overall adjustment; greater the anxiety, lower the overall adjustment.
- The correlation between anxiety and home, health and emotional adjustments are statistically significant at 0.01 level.
- The correlation between anxiety and social adjustment is low and not significant.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

- Since Positive Therapy was found to be very effective in reducing anxiety and enhancing adjustment in nursing students, Positive Therapy can be included in the Nursing curriculum.
- A psychologist/counsellor can be appointed in the institutions for nursing to facilitate sound physical and mental health in the students.
- Workshops on Positive Therapy, stress and anxiety management, personality development, human relations and effective learning can be conducted for nursing students to help them acquire skills to deal with the patients more effectively.
- Research applying the same variables as well as other psychological variables can be conducted on professional nurses.
- Similar studies can be conducted on a larger sample from different institutions in different states using Stratified Random Sampling.

## LIMITATIONS

Any research will have its own merits and limitations. The limitations of the present study are as follows:

- The size of the sample was limited to 79, drawn from a single institution from Coimbatore, offering one year certificate course in nursing. Hence, the findings cannot be generalized for nursing students in degree programmes. Probably, the study can be conducted on a larger and random sample.
- The sample was selected from a single institution.
- Only female nursing students were included in the study.
- The intervention given for 6 sessions helped most of the sample. If it were given for a longer duration, the entire sample would have benefitted.