

## ORIGINAL ARTICLE

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## PERCEIVED STRESS AMONG PHYSICAL THERAPY STUDENTS OF ISRA UNIVERSITY

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Recently increasing concern among stress is seen during health care undergraduate students but there is lack of such studies in physical therapy students in Pakistan. Higher stress levels affect the students in their education the effect of stress in physical therapy students throughout is well documented in western countries. This study aims at assessing the level of perceived stress among physical therapy students of Isra University.

**Method:** It's a Cross-sectional type of descriptive study that was conducted on hundred physical therapy students of Isra institute of rehabilitation sciences, ISRA University, Hyderabad. A Convenient, non-probability technique of sampling is used. 100 participant selected for study. All the Physical therapy students were included.

**Results:** Overall response rate was 100%. Moderate level of stress was found in 73% students (scored between 51-75%), severe level of stress was found in 8% students (scored >75%) whereas low level of stress was found in 19% of students (scored between 25-50%).

**Conclusion:** The current study presents the level of stress perceived by physical therapy students of Isra University, Hyderabad. The findings of the study revealed higher levels of stress in the physical therapy students. Majority of student perceived moderate stress and about 8% of students reported severe stress.

Further detailed and generalized studies are needed to evaluate the causes, effects and coping approaches adapted by the students. Furthermore level of stress should also be correlated with academic performance of the students. Findings of such studies may help to initiate certain strategies that may help students overcome their stress and cope efficiently with the upcoming problems.

**Keywords:** Stress, Physical therapy, ISRA, Hyderabad.

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## INTRODUCTION

Stress is defined as something that disturbs individual's physical or mental wellbeing. Stress usually occurs when a person fails to respond appropriately to the demands made on him. Stress may be either encouraging that is eustress that may enhance or trigger the performance and attention of an individual or harmful that is distress that may negatively affect physical or psychological wellbeing of the person [1,2].

Academic stress among the university students is a big challenge for the institutions nowadays. University undergraduates are more inclined to stress owing to environment of university life facing trouble in amending and upholding the hope of latest study atmosphere. Medical students are more prone to stress compared to students from other specialties and other persons [3].

Health care education is seen as highly difficult and challenging due to which high level of stress is observed in students, several studies have been conducted on MBBS, dental and nursing students that shows the stress and psychological morbidity among the students due their complex learning atmosphere.

Stressors may be defined as any stimulus that exacerbates the stress response in person. Stressors can be classified as acute or chronic and as external or internal in person [4]. Stress among the students could be classified into three categories: educational pressure, community concerns and economic troubles.

The most common symptoms that medical students may complain are: Not able to face problems, unable to enjoy normal daily activities, not able to make judgment, not able to play valuable part, unable to focus, feeling constantly under tension, thinking of self-worthlessness[5].

Coping strategies may be defined as cognitive proficiency or behavior efforts to deal with discrepancy that occurs between inner and peripheral environment. People attempt to resolve their troubles by screening off their feelings like shouting, weeping, calming etc [6].

Failure in coping stress may lead students to stop or discontinue further education, suicidal intentions or make students participating in activities like smoking, drinking, aggressive behavior with others, damaging institution's property or involving in violent activities by disrespecting laws and right of others [7].

The objective of the study is to assess level of perceived stress among physical therapy undergraduate students of Isra University, Hyderabad.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

It's a Cross-sectional type of descriptive study that was conducted on physical therapy students of Isra institute of rehabilitation sciences, Isra University, Hyderabad. A Convenient, non-probability technique of sampling was used. Total 100 Performa were randomly distributed among students of all years in their classes, response rate was 100 %.

Data was obtained by using perceived stress scale (PSS-14), developed by Sheldon Cohen et al. and became commonly used instrument to estimate the nonspecific perceived stress. Data was analyzed and evaluated using SPSS-21 software. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the data and frequency, percentage tables and pie chart used to describe the results. The questionnaires were anonymously administered to the students in their classrooms with the permission of ethical review committee. Informed consent was taken from the participants and verbally information was explained to the students before administering the questionnaires.

**Table1:** Perceived stress scale

STATEMENT	Never (%)	Almost never (%)	Sometimes (%)	Fairly often (%)	Very often (%)
Being upset due to something that happened unexpectedly	7	8	39	18	28
Feeling unable to control the important things in life	11	25	32	23	9
Feeling nervous and stressed	10	8	48	18	16
Able to deal successfully with day to day problems and annoyances	3	13	34	29	19
Feeling effectively coping with important changes in life	15	22	23	30	10
Feeling confident about ability to handle personal problems	3	5	30	28	34
Feeling things were going according to their own way	13	11	51	18	7
Feeling unable to cope with all things they had to do	13	20	45	15	7
Able to control irritations in life	5	19	34	30	12
Feeling on top of things	12	14	33	29	12
Being angered because things were happening outside of control	8	12	35	27	18
Thinking about things need to be accomplished	6	8	40	32	14
Able to control the way you spending time	3	19	39	29	10
Feeling that difficulties were piling up so high that they could not be over overcome	14	14	47	13	12

## RESULT

Out of 100 students 39% students replied that they were upset sometimes in last month, 28% replied they upset very often, 18% of them replied to be upset fairly often, 8% replied almost never and only 7% replied that they were never upset in last month because of something that had happened unexpectedly. Regarding control of important thing in your life, 32% reported that they sometimes felt to be unable to control important things in the last month, 25% were almost, 23% fairly often, 11% were never and 9% reported they very often were unable to control the important things in their life.

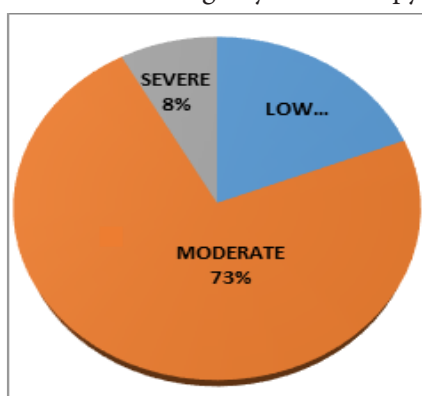
Regarding nervous and stressed 48% responded that they sometimes felt nervous and stressed in last month, 18% fairly often, 16% very often, 10% never felt and 8% responded that they almost never felt nervous and stressed in last month.

A question asked about dealt successfully with day to day problems and annoyances 34% dealt successfully, 29% fairly often, 19% students were very often, 13% never successful and only 3 responded that they never dealt successfully in last month. out of 100% around 30% students replied that they fairly often were successful in effectively coping with the important changes in their life during last month, 23% sometimes successful, 22% never successful, 10% responded that they were very often successful.

51% participant responded that they sometimes felt they were going their way in last month, 18 %fairly often felt, 7%participants very often, 13% never felt.45% students reported that they found that they could not cope with all the things that they had to do, 20% almost never, 15% fairly often, 13% replied never and 7% reported very often.35% reported sometimes angered because of something that had happened which was out of their control during last month., 37% fairly often, 18% very often 12% almost never and 8% were never. Related to how often have you found yourself thinking about things that you have to accomplish 40% students reported sometimes, 32% responded fairly often, 14% responded very often, 8% responded almost.

The level of stress was divided in three categories Low (0-50%), Moderate (50-75%) and Severe stress (>70%). According to the results 73% students perceived moderate stress, 19 % low stress whereas, 8% students were severely stressed.

**Chart 1:** Stress Levels among Physical Therapy students



## DISCUSSION

Stress in physical therapy students might result in the psychosomatic distress, the physical problems, and behavioral issues and may also contribute to reduced academic outcomes. Results of this study showed high level of stress in the physical therapy students of Isra University. Majority of students were identified in moderate stress category, findings revealed that out of 100 students 73% students had moderate stress. This finding was similar to the other studies conducted in Lahore a by Nudratsohail [9] and also to the studies conducted in Portugal and Saudi Arabia that were in similar perspective of assessing the level of stress among students showing majority of students in category of moderate stress. Another study conducted on physical therapy students of Malaysia by Vinthoni Padmanthan [3] showed the moderate stress in 89.7% of students showing majority of students having moderate stress.

Responses of the students to the perceived stress scale are further reports that were found much similar to that of the studies conducted by shah et al in Pakistan and Vinthoni et al in Malaysia. Overall responses of students and their relevancy with other studies are shown below. 39% of students responded that in last month sometimes they remained disturbed which was much similar to the responses of students in studies conducted Malaysia and Pakistan i.e. 37% and 51%.

34% students responded that sometimes during last month they dealt successfully with day to day problems, this finding was relevant to the study conducted in Pakistan by Shah et al, showing 37% of students responding similarly, whereas study conducted in Malaysia showed high percentage (54%).

30% students reported that sometimes in last month felt confident about handling their problems similar results were presented in study conducted in Pakistan (34%) whereas, Malaysian study showed greater percentage of student with similar response (46%). 45% students felt that sometimes during last month they were unable to cope with things that they had to do 48% and 43% response was reported in other studies.

High stress was found in physical therapy students of Isra University in this study. There is need of further studies to be conducted to further elaborate the causes and effects of stress among the students and the coping approaches adapted by these students to overcome the stress.

## CONCLUSION

The current study presents the level of stress perceived by physical therapy students of Isra University, Hyderabad. The findings of the study revealed higher levels of stress in the physical therapy students. Majority of student perceived moderate stress and about 8% of students reported severe stress.

Further detailed and generalized studies are needed to evaluate the causes, effects and coping approaches adapted by the students. Furthermore level of stress should also

be correlated with academic performance of the students. Findings of such studies may help to initiate certain strategies that may help students overcome their stress and cope efficiently with the upcoming problems.

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