

**A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY TO ASSESS THE PREVALENCE OF TRANSITIONAL STRESS AMONG  
FIRST YEAR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS RESIDING IN HOSTEL AT A SELECTED INSTITUTION  
IN KANYAKUMARI DISTRICT OF TAMIL NADU.**

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**ABSTRACT**

*This study was undertaken to determine the prevalence rate of transitional stress among first year undergraduate students residing in hostel at a selected institution in Kanyakumari District, Tamilnadu.*

**Aim:** *To assess the prevalence of transitional stress among first year undergraduate students residing in hostel and to associate its relationship with the selected demographic variables.*

**Materials and methods:** *Quantitative research approach with descriptive study design was used. Constituents of the sample were recruited using purposive sampling technique and the data collected from them using a structured self-administered scale was analysed with the application of Chi-square test.*

**Result:** *The study reveals that 91% of the sample has experienced transitional stress (48% mild stress, 27% moderate stress and 16% severe stress), wherein there is significant association between transitional stress and one selected demographic variable.*

**Conclusion:** *From the findings of the study, it is concluded that the prevalence of transitional stress is high among first year undergraduate students residing in hostel.*

**Key Words:** *Transitional Stress, Undergraduate Students, Hostel, Kanyakumari.*

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**INTRODUCTION**

Stress is a broader term that comprises the sum of physical, mental and emotional strain or tension on a person. It indicates the consequence of the failure of an organism – human or animal to respond appropriately to emotional or physical threats which are either actual or imaginative. Stress is an unavoidable part of life. Although certain amount of stress is necessary for survival, prolonged exposure to it can affect health adversely. Constant stress is one of the defining features of modern life, and is the source of many health problems. It plays a major role in nervousness, anxiety, insomnia and a large number of illnesses.

It is unclear what exactly defines stress and whether it is a cause or an effect or the process connecting the two. There are a number of factors on our everyday life which act as stressors and can contribute to the development stress. The stressors can be either internal or external factors, among which transition in life or major life changes is a common factor that affect many young adults in different ways. Transition in life is adjusting to perceived difficult changes in life. Over the course of lifetime, individuals can expect to experience a significant amount of change in the form of positive and negative life events. Transition to a new environment requires one to meet the demands of many unfamiliar people, tasks and situations. Moving from school to college level of education can be overwhelming for the students and can leads to significant level of stress. At this stage, moving to hostel from the supportive home environment can be an added stress on them. It can cause a number of physical and emotional problems as well as affect their academic performance.

**NEED FOR THE STUDY**

Attending college is the positive experience for many, yet many students also experience a significant level of stress due to academic requirements, dealing with unfamiliar people and situations, and the first experience of hostel life where parents' love and support are perceived as missing. The consequences of transitional stress on students discussed above and the researchers' personal experience as a faculty in educational institution observing it happening on regular basis, calls for conducting this study, so that interventional measures could be planned to prevent/ manage transitional stress among college students based on the results of this study.

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

“A descriptive study to assess the prevalence of transitional stress among first year undergraduate students residing in hostel at a selected institution in Kanyakumari District, Tamilnadu”

**OBJECTIVES**

1. To assess the prevalence of transitional stress among first year undergraduate students residing in hostel.
2. To identify the association between prevalence of transitional stress among first year undergraduate students residing in hostel and their selected demographic variables.

**HYPOTHESIS**

The hypothesis formulated for the study and tested at 0.05 level of significance is —

- There is significant association between the prevalence of transitional stress among first year undergraduate students with their selected demographic variables.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

**Research approach:** The study utilised a non-experimental quantitative research approach to determine the prevalence rate of transitional stress among first year undergraduate students residing in hostel.

**Research design:** The research design selected for the study was Descriptive study design, which observes and describes the presence of particular phenomena.

**Setting of the study:** The study was conducted at Grace Institutions in Kanyakumari district of Tamilnadu; where there are nearly 1000 students studying in various departments.

**Variables:**

- Research variable – prevalence of transitional stress
- Demographic variables – Age, sex, religion, type of family, area of residence, number of siblings, syllabus of higher secondary education and course of present UG education.

**Sample size & Sampling technique:** 110 first year UG hostel students who met the sample selection criteria were selected using purposive sampling technique.

**Research tool:** The research tool used in the study for data collection consists of two parts —

- Section: A – Selected demographic variables.
- Section: B – Structured self-administered scale to assess the transitional stress among UG students. It is a four-point scale with 20 items which gives a total score of 20 – 80. The interpretation of score gained by the participants is as follows —
  - 1 – 30 = No transitional stress
  - 31 – 50 = Mild transitional stress
  - 51 – 70 = Moderate transitional stress
  - 71 – 80 = Severe transitional stress

**Data collection:** With due consideration to all legal and ethical aspects, the data required for the study was collected using the designed tool from the participants after getting their consent.

**Data analysis and interpretation:**

- **Descriptive statistics:** Frequency and percentage distribution to describe the distribution of sample according to their selected demographic variables and to describe the prevalence of transitional stress.
- **Inferential statistics:** Chi-square test to find out the association between the prevalence of transitional stress among first year UG students residing in hostel and their selected demographic variables.

**Distribution of sample according to demographic variables:**

1. **Age:** Majority of the sample (62%) were at the age group of 18 years, whereas the other two components of the variables such as 17 years and 19 years & above are almost equally distributed which is 20% and 18% respectively.
2. **Sex:** In the context of this variable, the larger group was females (58%) and the remaining 42% of the sample was males.
3. **Religion:** Majority of the sample (54%) were Christians with an uneven distribution of other components of the variable such as 32% Hindus, 14% Muslims and no participant from any other religion.
4. **Type of family:** In the context of this variable, the larger group (61%) belonged to nuclear families and the remaining 39% of the sample were from joint families. No participant was from an extended family.
5. **Area of residence:** Majority of the sample (50%) were from rural areas, and the other two components were distributed as 39% from urban areas and 11% from other areas.
6. **Number of siblings:** Among the sample group, majority (55%) had one sibling, 32% had more than one sibling and 13% of them had no siblings.
7. **Syllabus of higher secondary education:** With reference to this variable, the best part of the sample (96%) had studied the state board syllabus of higher secondary education and a small number of participants constituted the other components such as CBSE syllabus and other syllabus which stood at 3% and 1% respectively.
8. **Course of present UG education:** As to course of present UG education, majority of the sample (36%) were from B.Sc Nursing department and the other components of the variable were distributed as 28% from B.Sc. Radiology department, 19% from B.Sc. MLT department and 17% from B.Sc. Optometry department.

Table 1 : Distribution of sample according to selected demographic variables and the association between transitional stress and demographic variables

Sl. No.	Variables	Components of variables	Frequency	Percentage	No stress	Mild stress	Moderate stress	Severe stress	DF	$\chi^2$	Table value at 0.05 level of significance	Interpretation
1	Age in years	17 years	22	20 %	1	1	11	9	6	1.51	12.59	No association
		18 years	68	62 %	4	44	13	7				
		19 years & above	20	18 %	5	8	5	2				
2	Sex	Male	46	42 %	8	26	9	3	3	0.07	7.81	No association
		Female	64	58 %	2	27	20	15				
3	Religion	Hindu	35	32 %	6	13	11	5	9	0.70	16.92	No association
		Muslim	16	14 %	1	6	6	3				
		Christian	59	54 %	3	36	12	8				
		Others	0	0 %	0	0	0	0				
4.	Type of family	Nuclear family	67	61 %	4	41	15	7	6	0.32	12.59	No association
		Joint family	43	39 %	6	12	14	11				
		Extended family	0	0 %	0	0	0	0				
5.	Area of residence	Urban	43	39 %	5	24	7	7	6	0.48	12.59	No association
		Rural	55	50 %	3	25	18	9				
		Others	12	11 %	2	4	4	2				
6.	No. of siblings	None	14	13 %	1	4	4	5	6	0.64	12.59	No association
		One	61	55 %	4	32	16	9				
		More than one	35	32 %	5	17	9	4				
7.	Syllabus of Higher secondary education	State board	106	96 %	6	53	29	18	6	13.94	12.59	Association present
		CBSE	3	3 %	3	0	0	0				
		Others	1	1 %	1	0	0	0				
8.	Course of present UG education	B.Sc. Nursing	39	36 %	1	18	11	9	9	0.36	16.92	No association
		B.Sc. MLT	21	19 %	2	8	6	5				
		B.Sc. Optometry	19	17 %	3	7	8	1				
		B.Sc. Radiology	31	28 %	4	20	4	3				
					10 (9%)	53 (48%)	29 (27%)	18 (16%)				
						100 (91%)						

Table: 1 presents the distribution of sample according to the demographic variables and the prevalence of transitional stress among first year undergraduate students residing in hostel and its association with the selected demographic variables.

**Prevalence of transitional stress:** Table -1 reveals that majority of the sample (91%) had experienced transitional stress, in which 48% experienced mild stress, 27% had moderate stress and 16% had severe stress.

**Association between the prevalence of transitional stress and demographic variables:** The results of Chi-square test reveal that there was significant association between the prevalence of transitional stress and syllabus of higher secondary education. In this, the calculated value of Chi-square test 13.94 was higher than the table value of 12.59 at 0.05 level of significance. There was no association found between the prevalence of transitional stress and the other selected demographic variables such as age, sex, religion, type of family, area of residence, number of siblings and course of present UG education.

## DISCUSSION

This descriptive study was conducted to determine the prevalence of transitional stress among first year undergraduate students residing in hostel using descriptive study design.

**The first objective of the study was to assess the prevalence of transitional stress among first year undergraduate students residing in hostel.** Results of the present study reveal that the prevalence of transitional stress is high among first year undergraduate students residing in hostel. In this study majority of the sample (91%) had experienced transitional stress, in which 48% had mild stress, 27% had moderate stress and 16% had severe stress.

**The second objective of the study was to identify the association between prevalence of transitional stress among first year undergraduate students residing in hostel and their selected demographic variables.** The results of Chi-square test reveal that there was significant association between the prevalence of transitional stress and syllabus of higher secondary education. In respect of this variable, 91% of the participants who had experienced transitional stress were all from State board syllabus of higher secondary education and none of the participants from CBSE and other syllabus of higher secondary education had revealed to have transitional stress. This could be possibly due to the fact that in CBSE and other higher level of secondary school syllabi the medium of study is English only and also the students are taught various stress management skills compared to state board syllabus. There was no association found between the prevalence of transitional stress and the other selected demographic variables such as age, sex, religion, type of family, area of residence, number of siblings and course of present UG education.

## SUMMARY

This descriptive study was conducted using sample comprising 110 first year undergraduate students from different paramedical field of courses, residing in hostel, to determine the prevalence of transitional stress on them. Data collected using a self-administered scale for transitional stress was analysed with the application of descriptive and inferential statistics. The study result revealed that 91% of the sample had experienced transitional stress with varying degrees of stress level such as 48% mild stress, 27% moderate stress and 16% severe stress. Results of Chi-square test reveal that there is significant association between the prevalence of transitional stress among first year undergraduate students residing in hostel and their syllabus of higher secondary education. With reference to other selected demographic variables such as age, sex, religion, type of family, area of residence, number of siblings and course of present UG education, no association was identified with the prevalence of transitional stress.

## CONCLUSION

The study highlights a higher prevalence of transitional stress among first year undergraduate students residing in hostel and it is significantly associated with the syllabus pursued by them at the higher secondary education level.

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