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"A True Experimental Study To Assess The Effectiveness Of Milieu Therapy On Stress Level Among College Going Students Of Indore''

Miss. Oshin Jamra (Nursing Tutor

Renaissance University, School of Nursing

Abstract: Stress is a condition of mental pressure that a particular individual faces due to environmental and social factors, which can lead to various diseases. The young age is a critical period because at this time, students face numerous changes in their lives. Students of the modern era are living in a highly competitive world, which exerts a lot of stress on students to survive in this era. Stress is an unavoidable phenomenon in all aspects of human life. Stress is an emotional imbalance which may occur due to various reasons, such as tests. Stress affects students academically, socially, physically, and emotionally. The transition of students from high school to college is inherently stressful for students. It could cause psychological, academic and social shock to them. From this perspective, this research was aimed at investigating the level of stressamong college students.

Index Terms - **Stress, College students, Milieu Therapy**

I. INTRODUCTION

Stress as an inescapable part of life generally touches a wide range of groups of the population with no regard to their age, gender, educational status or socioeconomic status. Despite the fact, stress, depression, and anxiety are prevailing mental health problems among college-going students. College-going students undergo numerous educational, social, environmental and psychological adjustment difficulties in the new campus atmosphere, which may affect their psycho-social well-being and learning outcomes.

II. Need for the study:

Research in clinical populations has shown that a structured, therapeutic environment improves mental well-being by fostering peer interactions and guided support activities. Although milieu therapy has been proven effective in reducing stress, anxiety, and behavioural issues in psychiatric patients, adolescents, and hospital-based populations, there is limited experimental research on its application in stress management among college students. College students experience high levels of stress due to academic pressure, social expectations, financial burdens, and personal challenges, which can negatively impact their mental health, academic performance, and overall well-being. Traditional stress management strategies, such as individual counselling and self-coping mechanisms, may not be accessible or effective for all students. Milieu therapy, which creates a structured and supportive social environment, has the potential to help students manage stress through peer interactions, guided activities, and emotional support. However, there is limited experimental research on its effectiveness in reducing stress among college students. By conducting a true experimental

study, this research aims to provide scientific evidence on the impact of milieu therapy, potentially offering an alternative, group-based intervention that can be integrated into college mental health programs.

III. OBJECTIVES:

1. To assess the stress level among college-going students.
2. To evaluate the effectiveness of milieu therapy in reducing stress.
3. To compare pre-test and post-test stress levels between the experimental and control groups.

IV. Hypothesis:

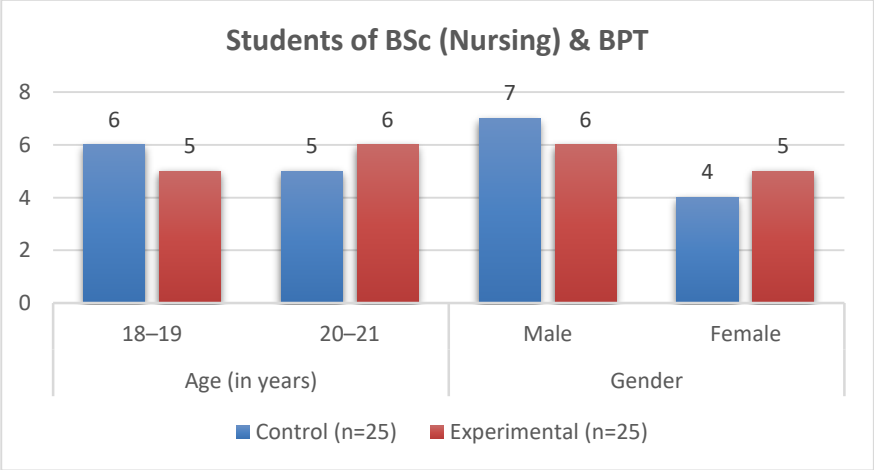
- **H0:** There is no significant difference between the experimental and control group after intervention.
- **H1:** There is a significant improvement in the post-test stress levels in the experimental group.

V. Methodology:

- **Research Design**
  A true experimental pre-test/post-test control group design.
- **Research Setting**
  Renaissance University, School of Nursing, Indore.
- **Population and Sampling**
  1. **Population:** College-going students (Nursing and Paramedical)
  2. **Sampling Method:** Simple random sampling.
  3. **Sample Size:** 50 students (Control group = 25; Experimental group = 25).
- **Inclusion Criteria**
  1. Students of Nursing and Paramedical.
  2. Those who are willing to participate.
  3. Students who are available for both the pre-test and post-test.
- **Exclusion Criteria**
  1. All the students except Nursing and Paramedical.
  2. Students who are not willing to participate.
  3. Students who are available for both the pre-test and post-test.
- **Essentials**
  1. Approval from the institutional ethics committee.
  2. Informed consent obtained.
  3. Confidentiality maintained.

VI. Results:

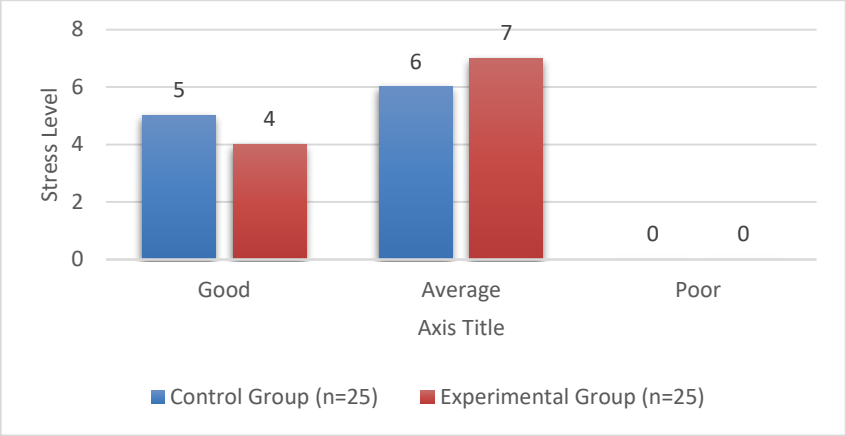
Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Participants (n=50)



Interpretation:

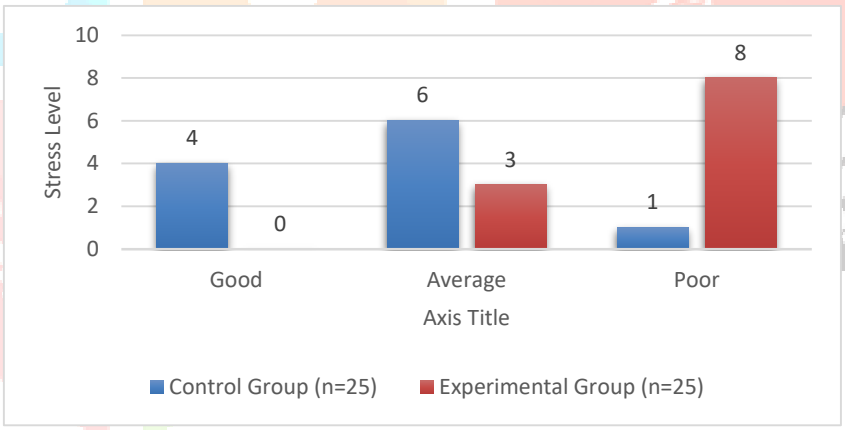
The sample consisted of equal numbers of male and female participants in both the control and experimental groups.This gender parity ensures that any observed differences in stress levels are unlikely to be influenced by gender, thereby enhancing the validity and generalisability of the results.

Table 2: Pre-Test Stress Levels (n=50)



Interpretation:
Pre-test stress levels were comparable in both the experimental and control groups before the intervention. Before therapy, both groups had almost similar stress levels.
No students had poor stress management skills. This indicates that the two groups started with similar baseline stress levels, which is crucial for the credibility of a true experimental design.

Table 3: Post-Test Stress Levels (n=50)



Interpretation:
After the intervention, stress levels decreased notably in the experimental group, which received milieu therapy, and more students moved to the "Good" category. This shows a clear improvement in the experimental group.
The control group, which did not receive the intervention, showed minimal change in stress levels. Two students fall into the "Poor" category from this group.

Table 4: Comparison of Mean Stress Scores

Group	Pre-test Mean ± SD	Post-test Mean ± SD	Mean Difference	t-value	p-value
Experimental	78.5 ± 9.2	52.4 ± 8.1	26.1	5.86	<0.001*
Control	76.8 ± 10.1	74.3 ± 9.8	2.5	0.96	>0.05

*p < 0.001 – Highly significant

Interpretation:

Post-test data showed a significant reduction in stress levels among students in the experimental group compared to the control group. The control group had almost no change. This confirms the effectiveness of milieu therapy. The experimental group showed a large drop in stress scores after therapy. The p-value (<0.001) means the result is highly significant.

VII. Conclusion:

The study concludes that Milieu therapy helped reduce stress. This therapy is an effective, low-cost intervention for reducing stress among college-going students. Educational institutions should consider integrating such interventions into student support programs.