

26<sup>th</sup> World Congress on

# NURSING CARE

May 21-23, 2018 Osaka, Japan

## Perceived stress and coping strategies of baccalaureate nursing students clinical practicum: A cross-sectional study

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**Background & Aim:** Nursing students are facing much stress in the course of study especially in the clinical practice component. The unpredictable and complex clinical environment imposes them much pressure and the way they cope with the pressure is essential as the inappropriate coping will definitely have negative impact on the quality of patient care. Since limited literature is available to report the factors affecting their stress level during clinical practicum and their coping strategies in Hong Kong, this study aims to explore the factors affecting nursing student's stress level and their common coping strategies.

**Method:** A cross-sectional study was conducted to explore nursing student's stress level, stressors and coping methods during clinical practice in Hong Kong. Baccalaureate nursing students who had completed all clinical practicums required by the undergraduate nursing program were the accessible population. Simple random sampling was used to randomly select students from a class list of that nursing program by drawing lot. The participants had to complete the self-reported questionnaire which comprised the demographic survey, Assessment of stress among nursing students and COPE inventory.

**Results:** A total of 131 eligible students returned the questionnaires with a response rate of 100%. They perceived that the most stressful events during the practicum were performance of practical activities and professional communication. Participants were prone to use problem or emotion-focused coping strategies but they will use non-functional coping strategies especially in female students. Female students used more social support, mental disengagement and focus on and venting emotions as compared to those in male students ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Conclusion:** Nurse educators and clinical mentors shall pay more attention to students whom may tend to use non-functional coping methods to deal with their stress. Further studies may focus on investigating the association between the characteristics of students and the use of non-functional coping strategies.

### Biography

Anson Chui Yan Tang is currently an Assistant Professor at Tung Wah College of Hong Kong. She has been working in the field for over 10 years and has enormous experience in teaching various nursing programs in hospitals and tertiary institutions. She is also the Program Leader of the Baccalaureate Nursing Program at the college and has been involved in various programs accreditation exercises. Her recent research interest is nursing education especially on innovative teaching and learning methods.

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