

Emotional Maturity and Its Effect on Coping Styles of Academic Stress among Nursing Students

Fatma Kamel ⁽¹⁾, Hemat Abd Elazeem ⁽²⁾, Heba Ali ⁽³⁾

(1) B.S.C Nursing – Beni-Suef University.

(2) Assistant Professor of Nursing Administration, Faculty of Nursing- Ain Shams University.

(3) Assistant Professor of Nursing Administration, Faculty of Nursing- Ain Shams University.

Abstract

Background: Emotionally mature students can cope with academic stress and hard conditions associated with learning. Emotional maturity and ways of coping have positive relationships, which contribute to a healthy personality. **The aim** of this study was to examine emotional maturity and its effect on coping styles with academic stress among nursing students. **Setting:** The study was carried out at the faculty of nursing at Beni-Suef University. **Design:** a descriptive correlational design. **Subject:** the subjects of this study were (170) nursing students of the fourth academic year. **Tools:** the data were gathered using two tools (the emotional maturity scale, the stress coping styles survey). **The Results:** the study revealed that there more than one-third with mean of 40% from nursing students had highest perception regarding total emotional maturity. Additionally, nearly two – thirds with mean of 69.9% from nursing students had a high total academic stress, Moreover, more than half with mean of 55% from nursing students had a positive coping style. **Conclusion:** the study findings concluded that was a positive, significant relationship between emotional maturity and coping styles among nursing students. Meanwhile, there is a negative relation between emotional maturity and academic stress among studied nursing students. **Recommendation:** Assess periodically of the causes and factors affecting academic stress among nursing students and providing an opportunity for nursing students to improve their socialization using (field trip, group counselling and community participation).

Keywords: academic stress, coping styles, emotional maturity, nursing students. Emotional Maturity and Its Effect on Coping Styles of Academic Stress among Nursing Students.

Introduction:

Emotional maturity is a subjective characteristic of an individual which varies across different age groups and gender. A mature individual is capable of handling stressful life circumstances effectively, (Srinivasan & Pugalenth, 2019). In addition to, if a person is emotionally maturing, may be able to make effective adjustments with himself, family members, peers, society, and culture, as well as environment, (Jadav & Tajpuria, 2019).

Emotional Maturity is the outcome of healthy emotional development. An emotionally mature person is one who can keep a lid on their emotions and feelings in a socially acceptable manner, (Nuzhat, 2019). Also, emotional maturity goes along with many principles, such as: every negative emotion in a person is a consequence of the past experiences,

adults are also fixated on emotions from their childhood, (Zamroni, Ramli & Hambali, 2018).

The principles of emotional maturity go along with five principles: every negative emotion in a person is a consequence of past experiences, adults are fixated with emotions of their childhood, a person's feelings are individualized, adults being emotionally mature is a universal fact, and mindfulness, attentional focus, and self-awareness, (Sarita, Kavita & Sonam, 2016).

Stressors are different in an individual's daily life, viewed as the body's reaction, both neurologically and physiologically, to adapt to a new condition, when there is a change in life, adjusting us to fit into the new condition, (Mishra, 2018). Academic stress is the anxiety and stress that comes from schooling and education, (Aihie & Ohanaka, 2019).

Academic stress refers to the unpleasant situations that occur due to the many demands made on students or learners in the form of examinations, maintaining healthy and academic lives, competing with peers, meeting the academic expectations of teachers and parents, (Barker, et al,2018). A sizeable body of literature in stress management research has found that self-regulation and being mindful will help students cope with stress and dodge long-term negative consequences, (Mostafavian, et al., 2018).

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Nursing students suffer from high levels of stress-related to academic assignments in addition to clinical skills training. (Roorda, et al, 2019). Similarly, help to predict a student's academic career based on level of emotional maturity and academic stress, there are some healthy ways of coping with stress styles like, take a break when you need, take some deep breaths and slow down relax the body by stretching muscles, (Goswami& Roy, 2019)

Coping has been defined as "constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are deemed taxing" or "exceeding the person's resources", (Jihanm, et al.,2019). Coping styles of stress encompass like combinations of thoughts, beliefs and behaviors that result from the experience of stress and may be expressed independently of the type of stressor. (Abouammoh, Irfan & AlFaris, 2020).

Nursing profession plays an important role in providing health care. The general health of nurses' performance is essential in-patient care, Emotional maturity is considered as an important characteristic of nurses that can affect the quality of their work including clinical decision-making, critical thinking, evidence and knowledge use in practice, (Behera & Rangaiah, 2017). Stress at nursing work is a big problem and often stressful occupation. Thus, nurses' health could be affected by stress dangerous consequences, so

coping strategies and emotional maturity are key elements of nurses' stress reactions, (Khater, Zaheya, & Shaban ,2018).

Significance of the study:

Emotional maturity includes the ability to engage in self-control. The most essential characteristic of emotional maturity is the ability to endure stress, the effect of emotional maturity on academic stress among undergraduate students, (Kio, Omeonu, & Agbede, 2018). according to the point of view of the researcher, in today's highly competitive world, students face various academic problems, including exam stress, disinterest in attending classes, and inability to understand the subject. The present research study addresses the issues regarding emotional maturity and ways of coping among students' studies. So, this study was conducted to explain the effect of emotional maturity on coping styles of academic stress among nursing students.

Aim of the study:

The aim of this study is to assess nursing students' emotional maturity and its effect on coping styles of academic stress among them.

Research question

- What is the effect of emotional maturity on coping styles of academic stress among nursing students?

Subjects and methods:

Research Design:

A descriptive correlational design was used to carry out this study.

Research Setting: This study conducted at faculty of nursing-Beni-Suef University which located at Beni-Suef governorate and affiliated to the Ministry of Higher Education.

Subjects:

The subjects of this study were (170) nursing students at fourth academic year (2020-

2021) out of (300) nursing students, who selected by simple random sampling techniques.

Tool of data collection:

Two tools were used for the data collection namely: emotional maturity scale and stress coping styles survey.

First tool: Emotional Maturity Scale:

This tool aimed at assessing the emotional maturity of nursing students. It consisted of two parts.

First part: It includes demographic characteristic data as (age, pre-university education (general or technical), type of family, Etc.)

Second part: This part included the emotional maturity scale adopted from (Hassen, 2012). It used to assess the emotional maturity among studied nursing students. The scale was standardized and tested for validity and reliability consisting of 48 items under five dimensions: Emotional Instability (9 items), Emotional Regression (10 items), Emotional Maladjustment (10 items), Personality Disintegration (9 items), Lack of Independence (10 items).

❖ **Scoring system**

It is a self-reporting five-point scale. Items of the scale are in question form demanding information for each in either of the 5 options: (never, probably, undecided, much, and very much). The items were scored as 0,1,2,3 and 4 respectively. The score for the total scale were summed-up and the total divided by the number of the items, and the sum scores were converted into percent scores. Therefore, the higher the score on the scale, greater the degree of the emotional immaturity and vice versa.

Second tool: Stress coping style survey.

It consisted of two parts.

First part: students' academic stress survey

This part included academic Stress survey adopted from (Hassen, 2012). It used to assess level of academic stress among studied nursing students. The scale was standardized and tested for validity and reliability consisted of 40 items under five dimensions: Personal inadequacy (15items), Fear of failure(7items), Interpersonal difficulties with teachers (5 items), Teacher - Pupil relationship / Teaching methods (6 items), Inadequate study facilities (7 items).

❖ **Scoring system**

Items were scored 0,1, 2, 3, and 4 for the responses (No Stress, Slight Stress, Moderate Stress, High Stress and Extreme Stress) respectively. The scores of the items of each academic stress dimension and for the total scale were summed-up and the total divided by the number of the items, and the sum scores were converted into percent scores. Means, standard deviations were calculated. The perception of academic stress was considered to be high if the percent score was 60% or more, and low if less than 60%.

Second part: Stress coping styles survey:

This part was included coping styles survey adopted from (Hassen, 2012). It used to assess coping styles among studied nursing students. The scale was standardized and tested for validity and reliability consisted of 40 items under three dimensions: Appraisal focused (9 items), Emotional focused (18 items), Problem focused (13 items).

❖ **Scoring system**

Items were scored 0,1, 2, 3, and 4 for the responses (never, very rarely, sometimes, very often and always) respectively. The scores of the items of each academic stress dimension and for the total scale were summed-up and the total divided by the number of the items, and the sum scores were converted into percent scores. Means, standard deviations were calculated, the response of the subjects for coping style was indicate the extent to which behave. It considered being positive if the percent score was 60% or more.

Fieldwork:

The fieldwork of the study extended through second term of semester of the academic year (2020-2021). It took three months from March 2021 to May 2021.

The researcher introduced himself to nursing students, and then the components of questionnaire sheets were explained to participants, who were sure that the information collected would be used to for scientific research only and would be confidential. Questionnaire sheets were distributed to participants and with the presence of the research in their classes and labs to answer any enquiry. Study tools were completed during day duty and collected from the participants and their filling in took about 30 minutes. The researcher checked each questionnaire sheet after being completed by each participant to ensure the completion of all information.

Statistical Design:

Data entry and statistical analysis were done using SPSS 20.0 statistical software package. Data were presented using descriptive statistics in the form of frequencies and percentages for qualitative variables, and means and standard deviations and medians for quantitative variables. Quantitative continuous data were compared using the non-parametric Mann-Whitney. Qualitative categorical variables were compared using chi-square test. Spearman rank correlation was used for assessment of the inter-relationships among quantitative variables and ranked ones. In order to identify the independent predictors of academic stress score and emotional maturity score, multiple linear regression analysis was used and analysis of variance for the full regression models was done. Statistical significance was considered at p -value <0.05 .

Results:

Table (1): It shows that, all of them (100 %) their age is more than 20 years old. In addition, majority of them (93.7) live at rural residence, (90%) were single and live with

joint family, and. While, more than half (53.6) had first birth order and (54.2%) were expatriate resident

Table (2): shows that, the nursing students had a highest perception (mean 51%) regarding Emotional Instability dimension. Meanwhile, the nursing students had a lowest perception regarding Emotional Maladjustment, and Personality Disintegration dimensions, (Mean 30.8%, and 31.7%) respectively. Additional, mean 40% from nursing students had a highest perception regarding total emotional maturity.

Table (3): It shows that, the 76.9% of nursing students had a high academic stress regarding interpersonal difficulties with teachers' dimension. Meanwhile, the 53.5% of nursing students had a high academic stress regarding inadequate study facilities dimension. Additionally, the 69.9% from nursing students had a high total academic stress.

Figure (1): It shows that, the more than two third 64.7% of nursing students had a positive coping style regarding Emotional focused dimension. Meanwhile, the more than one-third 39.4% of nursing students had a high a positive coping style regarding problem-focused dimension. Additionally, the more than half 55% from nursing students had a positive coping style.

Table (4): It shows that, higher mean scores regarding emotional maturity of nursing students who had 2nd birth order than 1st order (98.7%), who live at urban residence than rural residence (97.6%).

Table (5): It shows that, higher mean scores regarding academic stress of nursing students who female than male (95.6%), who had nuclear family higher than had joint family (93.4%), and their parents' income below 3 thousand (91.2%).

Table (6): It shows that a positive significant relation between emotional maturity and coping styles among nursing students. Meanwhile, there is a negative relation between

emotional maturity and academic stress among studied nursing students

Table (7): It shows that increasing local resident score as the positive independent statistically significant predictors of high score of emotional maturity of studied nursing students.

Table (8): It shows that increasing expatriate resident score as the positive independent statistically significant predictors of high score of academic stress of studied nursing students.

Table (9): shows that increasing female gender and 1st birth order scores as the positive independent statistically significant predictors of high score for coping styles of studied nursing students.

Table (1): Demographic characteristics of studied nursing students (n=170).

Demographic	Frequency	Percent
Age:		
20	0	0
+20	170	100
Gender:		
Male	33.5	19.7
Female	136.5	80.3
Social status:		
single	164	90
married	6	10
Residence		
Urban	19	6.3
Rural	151	93.7
Pre-University Education		
Secondary	126	74
Institute	44	26
Parent Income		
below 3 thousand	48	28
above 3 thousand	122	72
Type of Family		
joint	164	90
nuclear	6	10
Birth order		
1 st	91	53.6
2 nd	47	27.6
3 rd	32	18.8
Nature of Residence		
Local resident	78	45.8
Expatriate resident	92	54.2

Table (2): Mean score of nursing student's response toward Emotional maturity dimensions (n=170).

Dimensions	Mean	Max=100
Emotional Instability	51	
Emotional Regression	41	
Emotional Maladjustment	30.8	
Personality Disintegration	31.7	
Lack of Independence	46	
total	40	

Table (3): total academic stress among studied nursing students (n=170).

Dimensions	High academic stress +60%
personal inadequacy	73.6
Fear of failure	71
interpersonal difficulties with teachers	76.9
Teacher - Pupil relationship / Teaching methods	74.9
inadequate study facilities	53.5
total	69.9

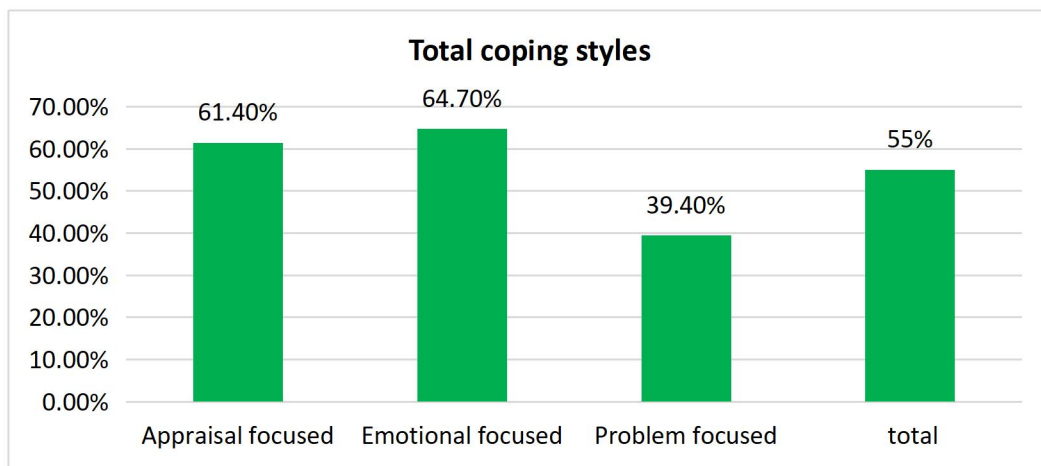


Figure (1): Total coping styles among studied nursing students (n=170).

Table (4): Relation between nursing students’ emotional maturity and their demographic characteristics.

	Emotional maturity +60%	Mann	
	Mean ±SD	Whitney test	p-value
Gender:			
Male	82.6±14.6		
Female	92.6±7.1	0.39	0.05*
Social status:			
single	90.0±21.6		
married	93.7±8.5	1.36	0.27
Residence			
Urban	97.6±11.9		
Rural	80.4±9.2	0.25	0.05*
Pre-University Education			
Secondary	88.9±12.1	0.05	0.82
Institute	83.9±3.4		
Parent Income		1.93	0.05
below 3 thousand	91.2±8.9		
above 3 thousand	90.4±12.6		
Type of Family			
joint	88.6±15.3	0.18	0.67
nuclear	91.4±8.7		
Birth order		0.43	0.77
1 st	96.0±21.6		
2 nd	98.7±8.5		

(*) statistically significant at p<0.05

Table (5): Relation between coping styles of academic stress among studied nursing students and their demographic characteristics.

	Positive +60%		Mann Whitney test	p-value
	Mean±SD	Median		
Gender:				
Male	87.6±14.6	93.35		
Female	95.6±6.1	93.65	0.39	0.05*
Social status:				
single	80.0±21.6	89.30		
married	91.7±8.5	94.00	1.36	0.24
Residence				
Urban	91.6±11.9	94.00		
Rural	82.4±9.2	93.30	0.12	0.73
Pre-University Education				
Secondary	88.9±12.1	92.00	0.05	0.82
Institute	90.9±3.4	94.00		
Parent Income			1.93	0.05*
below 3 thousand	91.2±8.9	94.00		
above 3 thousand	70.4±12.6	72.35		
Type Of Family				
joint	88.6±15.3	95.30	0.18	0.67
nuclear	93.4±8.7	93.30		
Birth order				
1 st	88.6±15.3	95.30	0.18	0.67
2 nd	92.4±8.7	93.30		

(*) statistically significant at p<0.05

Table (6): Correlation matrix of emotional maturity, academic stress, and coping styles dimensions.

Dimensions	Spearman's rank correlation coefficient		
	Emotional maturity	Academic stress	Coping styles
Emotional maturity			
Academic stress	-.123		
Coping styles	.675**	-.038	

(**) Highly statistically significant p<0.01

Table (7): Best fitting multiple linear regression model for emotional maturity score (n=170).

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t-test	p-value	95 %	
	B	Std. Error				Lower	Upper
Constant	33.42	6.55		5.103	<0.001	20.48	46.36
male gender	-11.15	4.48	-0.19	-2.491	0.014	-20.00	-2.30
Local resident	15.30	3.95	0.30	3.877	<0.001	7.50	23.09

R-square=0.12 Model ANOVA: F=9.81, p<0.001

Table (8): Best fitting multiple linear regression model for academic stress score (n=170).

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t-test	p-value	95% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error				Lower	Upper
Constant	73.13	3.77		19.152	<0.001	64.71	79.54
Expatriate resident	92.44	2.03	0.18	3.178	0.002	10.43	24.45

R-square=0.32 Model ANOVA: F=32.18, p<0.001

Table (9): Best fitting multiple linear regression model for coping styles score (n=170)

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t-test	p-value	95% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error				Lower	Upper
Constant	45.87	2.26		20.271	<0.001	41.40	50.34
Female gender	7.10	3.52	0.16	2.016	0.046	0.14	14.05
1 st birth order	15.30	3.95	0.30	3.877	<0.001	7.50	23.09

R-square=0.02

Model ANOVA: F=4.07, p=0.046

Discussion

Emotional maturity is the ability of the person to identify own and others' emotions, to differentiate between different emotions, to label them appropriately, and to use emotional information to guide thinking and behavior, (Asimopoulos, et al., 2020). Coping strategies are fundamental elements of nurses' stress reactions and become constant factor which important as the stressful event itself. So, nursing student's requisite to cope with academic and clinical stress, (Fteiha, & Awwad, 2020). So, the current study aimed to assess nursing students' emotional maturity and its effect on coping styles of academic stress among nursing students.

The present study findings are consistent with research conducted in Korea, Kim, (2019) who found that majority of students were lived in rural area, while this result is in disagreement with Srisongkhram, & Srisongkhram (2019), Who found that more than half of students were lived in urban area, Schaper, (2020) who a studied in Netherlands, and found that majority of students were single, and Fteiha, & Awwad, (2020) who a studied in Jordan, and found that more than half of students had first order in their family. Conversely, this result is in disagreement with Yang, et al., (2019) who a studied in China, and found that more than two thirds of students had second birth order in their family.

Regarding emotional instability, the current study illustrated that, the nursing students had a highest perception regarding take the help of other persons to complete your personal work. Meanwhile, the nursing students had a lowest perception regarding reaching the goal, feel This result may be due to nursing students were fired from sense of failure and

need to support from other persons to complete their tasks, In addition regarding emotional regression, the current study illustrated that, the nursing students had a highest perception regarding feel that you are self-centered. Meanwhile, the nursing students had a lowest perception regarding experience a sense of discomfort. This result may be due to nursing students had thoughts in their mind about worry and fear from achieving their goals, Also regarding emotional maladjustment, the current study showed that, the nursing students had a highest perception regarding proud by nature. Meanwhile, the nursing students had a lowest perception regarding lie, and this result may be due to nursing student were identified the profession of nursing had the best future for their graduation, while regarding personality disintegration, the current study illustrated that, the nursing students had a highest perception regarding indulge freely without bothering about moral codes, Meanwhile, the nursing students had a lowest perception regarding the habit of stealing of any kind, and this result may be due to nursing student had high level of responsibility and due to respectful to their profession. Regarding lack of independence, the current study illustrated that, the nursing students had a highest perception regarding give more importance to your work than others work. Meanwhile, the nursing students had a lowest perception regarding disagree with the opinions of your group, this result may be due to nursing student during the period of the studying in nursing hadn't full authority and responsibility to complete their work.

This result is congruence with Kuruvilla, & Menezes, (2019) who a studied the effect of emotional intelligence training on emotional maturity of graduate nursing students in Asian, and found that most of nursing

students needed to assistant from other person to complete their tasks. Also, this result is congruence with **Fteiha, & Awwad, (2020)** who a studied the emotional intelligence and its relationship with stress coping style in Jordan, and found that more than half of students had felling of stress and worried during complete their tasks. This result is in agreement, with **Gupta, & NT, (2019)** who a studied in India, and found that majority of nursing students had felling of discomfort and worry toward their studying and adapted with their disease, also **Rigi, et al., (2019)** who a studied in Iran, and found that majority of students were lover their college and proud with it. On the other hand, while this result is in disagreement with **Kim, (2018)** who a studied in Korea, and found that more than half of nursing students had bad images about nursing profession.

This result is accordance with **Dhanakotti, & Rajendran, (2020)** who a studied in India, and found that majority of nursing students had high level of dependence on themselves to solve their problem freely. In contrast, this result is in disagreement with **Shi, (2021)** who a studied in China, and found that more than half of students had felling of stress and depression that effect negatively on their tasks. Moreover, this result was supported with **Reji, & NC. (2020)** who a studied in India, and found that more than three quarters of students had lack of independence and need to others to help them in completing their work. Also, this result is congruence with **Kuruvilla, & Menezes, (2019)** who a studied in Asian, and found that most of nursing students needed to assistant from other person to complete their tasks.

Regarding total academic stress among studied nursing students, the current study showed that, the more than three quarters of nursing students had a high academic stress regarding interpersonal difficulties with teachers' dimension. Meanwhile, the more than half of nursing students had a high academic stress regarding inadequate study facilities dimension, and this result may be due to nursing students were feared from their teachers thus couldn't deal with teachers and avoided spoken with them. This result is supported with **Abedi, & Kalantaree, (2020)** who a studied in Iran,

and found that majority of students had bad relations with their teachers. Also, this result is congruence with **Agbaria, (2021)** who a studied in Israeli–Palestinian high school students, and found that more than half of students had academic stress in their school and fear from curriculums.

Regarding total coping styles among studied nursing students, the current study showed that, the more than two third of nursing students had a positive coping style regarding emotional focused dimension. Meanwhile, the more than one-third of nursing students had a high a positive coping style regarding problem-focused dimension. Additionally, the more than half from nursing students had a positive coping style. This result is accordance with **Cuppari, (2018)** who a studied in USA, and found that more than half of students had positive total coping styles. Conversely, this result is in disagreement with **Wassermann, et al., (2019)** who a studied in the South African, and found more than half of nursing students had bad coping styles.

Regarding relation between nursing student's emotional maturity and their demographic characteristics, the current study showed that, there are statistically significance relation between nursing stress emotional maturity and their gender and residence place. This result may be due to presences relation between nursing student's emotional maturity and their demographic characteristics, and this result is accordance with **Thomas, et al., (2021)** who a studied in Lebanon, and found that there was significant relation between nursing student's emotional maturity and their demographic characteristics. In contrast, this result is in disagreement with **Sharifi, et al., (2018)** who a studied in Iran, and found that there was no significant relation between nursing student's emotional maturity and their demographic characteristics.

Regarding relation between coping styles of academic stress among studied nursing students and their demographic characteristics, the current study showed that, there are statistically significance relation between nursing students academic stress and their gender. This result may be due to strategies of coping style help nursing students to adapt with

academic stress, This result is accordance with **Sahu, et al., (2019)** who a studied in India, and found that there was a positive relation between the use of copying style among nursing students. Also, this result is supported with **Wassermann, et al., (2019)** who a studied in the South African, and found that there was a good relation between stress and coping of nursing students and their demographic characteristics.

Regarding correlation matrix of emotional maturity, academic stress, and coping styles dimensions scores, the current study indicated a positive significant relation between emotional maturity and coping styles among nursing students. Meanwhile, there is a negative relation between emotional maturity and academic stress among studied nursing students. This result may be due to coping style enhance of academic stress and problems of nursing students and improve emotional maturity of them, this result is congruence with **Farid, et al., (2019)** who a studied in Iran, and found that there was positive statistically correlations among academic stress of studied nursing students and coping strategies. Also, this result is supported with **Abedi, & Kalantaree (2020)** who a studied in Iran, and found that there was a positive correlation between emotional maturity of students' and academic stress.

Conclusion

In the light of the study finding, it can be concluded that more than one- third from nursing students had highest perception regarding total emotional maturity. Additionally, nearly two – thirds from nursing students had a high total academic stress and more than two-thirds of nursing students positive coping style regarding Emotional focused dimension. Meanwhile, the more than one-third of nursing students had a high a positive coping style regarding problem-focused dimension, Moreover, more than half had a positive coping style.

Recommendations:

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended:

- Establish comprehensive orientation program for nursing students, ensuring importance of subjects they studied.
- Collaboration between teachers and students to enhance the communication skills and sense of self confidence to improve coping styles of stress.
- Further studies are suggested

A- Assessment of the relationship between emotional maturity and education level among nursing students.

B- Assessment of the relationship between academic stress and teacher-students relationship (teaching methods).

C- Assessment of the factors influencing coping styles.

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