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**A study to assess the physical health status, stress experienced
and coping strategies of boarders in selected Government
Residential Schools at Udupi District**

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"ABSTRACT

A research study titled "A study to assess the physical health status, stress experienced and coping strategies of boarders in selected Government Residential Schools at Udupi District in view to develop a health promotion programme" was conducted by Ms. Edle Flavia Fernandes as a partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science in Nursing at Manipal College of Nursing, Manipal, Manipal University.

The objectives of the study were to assess the physical health status of the boarders of selected Government Residential Schools by performing physical health assessment, identifying the level of stress among the boarders using Stress rating scale, assess the coping strategies of boarders by using the Likert scale, determine the association between level of stress and coping of the boarders and to develop health promotion programme for boarders based on the health needs identified.

The conceptual framework of this study was based on Lazarus & Folkman's modified transactional model of stress 1984 was adapted for the study. A quantitative approach with descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. Purposive sampling method was the sampling technique used. The instruments used for data collection were: demographic proforma, stress rating scale, coping scale and physical health assessment checklist.

Content validity was established by giving the tools to seven experts. Pretesting was done among six boarders and reliability was done among twenty boarders. All the tools were found to be reliable.

The pilot study was conducted among 30 boarders. It was found feasible. All the required permissions were sought, including the approval from Ethics committee.

The data were collected from 8th January to 17th of January 2016. A total of 300 boarders from 4 Government Residential Schools of Udupi District were selected for the study. Physical health status, stress and coping of boarders were assessed using research instruments.

Data were analyzed using SPSS 16.0 version. Both the descriptive and inferential statistics were used for identifying the results.

Majority 131 (43.7%) of the boarders were in the age group of 14 years, 50.7% of boarders were studying in 9th Standard, most of the (50.7%) boarders were females. Birth order data indicated that 45.0% were 1st child in their family. Majority (51.3%) belonged to a nuclear family, place of residence was rural said by 61% of boarders, majority (65.7%) of boarders had more than 3 years of experience in the current boarding school, majority (81%) of boarders had no previous boarding experience, 98.7% boarders had no history of illness

before and after joining boarding. The main reason for joining boarding school was found as (99%) better education among boarders.

Among 300 boarders 70% of boarders were underweight, 8% were having respiratory tract problems and common respiratory problems were cough and cold (7.3%), skin problems were 12.7% out of it 3.7% had dandruff, 3.3% had rashes, 3.0%, 2.7% had itching and were pallor respectively. Eye problems among boarders were 7.7% and watery eyes and itching was most (3.3%) common among them. Other common problems were dental (4.3%) that is dental caries and ear problems (3.3%) that is presence of wax in the ear (2.3%).

The present study revealed that majority (71%) of boarders were experiencing mild stress and 29% of the boarders were having moderate stress. The major areas of stress among boarders were: difficulty in concentration in boarding environment (65.7%), lack of entertainment (56%), strict discipline (52%), insufficient visiting hours (50.3%), adjustmental problems (40.3%), lack of confidence to handle problems (40%), difficult to approach the care taker (40%), restriction of freedom (35.3%) and difficulty in approaching higher authority (32%). Almost all (99.3%) of the boarders had adaptive coping whereas very few (0.7%) had mal-adaptive coping.

Most common adaptive strategies were: performing daily activities (94.70%), taking boarding as a challenge (85%), helping others (82.3%), accepting the reality (77.30%), socializing with other boarders (65.70%), friendship with seniors (58%) and diverting mind to studies (53%).

Most common mal-adaptive coping strategies of boarders were: blaming others (91.7%), praying to God to finish boarding life (67.3%), avoidance of the fact of being in boarding (29.7%), sleeping excessively (5.3%).

The study concluded that adolescents residing in boarding were mainly between 12-15 years of age and the risk to acquire infections was high among them due to poor immunity, lack of hygiene or easy spread of infectious micro organisms. Majority of boarders were underweight and few had skin problems, respiratory tract problems, eye problems, dental problems and ear problems. Most common infections identified among the boarders were: cough and cold, rashes, presence of wax in the ear, ear pain, watery eyes and itching and dental caries. Level of stress experienced by boarders was mild to moderate and almost all the boarders had adaptive coping.