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**A study to assess the perceived stress and eating behaviour  
among undergraduate students in selected professional and non-  
professional colleges of Udupi district.**

RINTU THOMAS

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## "ABSTRACT

A research study titled "A study to assess the perceived stress and eating behavior among undergraduate students in selected professional and non-professional colleges of Udupi district" was conducted by Ms Rintu Thomas in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Masters of Science in Nursing at Manipal College of Nursing, Manipal, Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Karnataka.

The objectives of the study were to determine level of perceived stress among the undergraduate students, to find out the factors influencing stress among undergraduates, to assess the eating behavior of undergraduate students, to compare the perceived stress of professional and non-professional undergraduate students and to correlate the perceived stress and domains of eating behavior of professional and non-professional undergraduate students.

Conceptual model of the study was based on Betty Newman's system model, 1974. It focusses on the response of the client system to actual or potential environmental stressors. A quantitative approach with a comparative survey design was adopted for the study.

The data collection instruments used for the study were demographic proforma, perceived stress scale (PSS), factors influencing stress and three factor eating questionnaire-21 (TFEQ-21).

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Content validity were established by giving the tools to seven experts and modified according to their suggestions. The pretesting was done among five undergraduate students. Reliability of the research tools were obtained by administering the tool twenty undergraduate students of Udupi district. Professional and non-professional colleges were taken as the research setting. Simple random sampling was used for the selection of colleges and students were selected from each colleges through proportionate sampling technique. The samples of the study were professional and non-professional undergraduate students between the age of eighteen to twenty from first, second and third year classes. Pilot study was conducted among thirty professional undergraduate students and thirty non-professional students in the first week of December 2017 after obtaining the administrative permission from the principal and the study design was found to be feasible . Therefore, there is no changes made for the main study.

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for the analysis of data. All data were analyzed by using SPSS version 16.0 package. The major findings of the study were most of 91 (45.5%) of professional students and 92 (46%) of non-professional students were aged 18 years. Most of the professional students 65(32.5%) and non-professional students 75(37.5%) were females. Majority of the professional students 175(87.5%) and non-professional students 115(57.5%) were from nuclear family. Families of 123(61.5%) professional students and 134(67%) non-professional students had a monthly income of above Rs.10,000. Most of the professional students 109(54.5%) and non-professional students 191(95.5%) were day scholars.

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Majority of the professional students 150(75%) and non-professional students 154(77%) had moderate level of stress category. And 16(8%) professional students and 8(4%) non-professional students had high stress. The mean score of perceived stress of professional students was 18.8 +5.527 and that of non-professional students was 17.57+4.877. Mean score of perceived stress for professional students is more than the mean score of non-professional students. Majority of professional students had stress 144(72%) due to overload of studies. Only 18(9%) of professional students had stress due to their part time job. Majority of the professional students 128(64%) expressed that they have stress due to examinations and 34(17%) of non-professional students said that they have stress due to adjustment problems with roommates /friends.

The mean score of uncontrolled eating was more for professional students 21.24+ 4.231 and non-professional students 21.84+4.808 than that of other domain. There is difference in the mean score of cognitive restraint of professional students 12.28+ 3.363 and non-professional students 13.10+3.464 and also there is a difference in the mean score of emotional eating of professional students 10.56+3.664 and non-professional students 12.03+3.464.

Statistically significant difference was found in the perceived stress of professional and non-professional students ( $z = -2.397, p = .017$ ). There is a weak positive correlation between perceived stress and uncontrolled eating of professional students ( $\rho = .162, p = .022$ ) and non-professional students ( $\rho = .183, p = .009$ ). There is

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no association was found between perceived stress and selected demographic variables such as age, gender, study course, year of study, type of family, occupation of parents, family monthly income and place of residence ( $p > .05$ ).

The study concluded that the perceived stress of professional undergraduate students are more compared to non-professional undergraduate students. Factors such as personal factors, academic factors, social relations and environmental factors influences the stress of students. Also there is a weak positive relation between uncontrolled eating and perceived stress. I.e., if the stress is more, they are having uncontrolled eating behavior. It was also found that perceived stress is independent of demographic variables such as age, gender, study course, year of study, type of family, occupation of the parents and place of residence."