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Should Nursing Education Programs Be Stressful?

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Introduction

Stress has a deleterious effect on the overall health of any individual. In nursing students, the stressful environment within the program is of concern because students are expected to perform under pressure which increases their stress levels. Constant stress could ultimately alter their performance in the program and increase the risk of them failing out. Therefore, this research is needed to allow the structure of nursing education to be reformed and lessen the stress environment that will better the learning of future nurses and help them be better equipped to provide care using the Nursing Care Model.

Research Questions

➢ What are the main stressors associated on student nurses?

➢ What are the implications of these stressors?

➢ What can nursing faculty do to decrease stressors within the program?

Limitations

➢ Our research had some limitations of time; this research was merely 6 weeks, and resources: only using two databases.

➢ Secondly, due to the short period of time, a survey could not be circulated among the students in both Baccalaureate and Second-Degree students for the Nursing Program.

Methodology

A literature review was conducted to obtain my sample of ten articles from CINAHL and Medline data resources, of which only four articles were selected for this research. These articles were peer reviewed and published between the years 2008-2018.

The Nursing Model theory was derived from Dr. Jean Watson's Human Caring Theory, of which this was used to demonstrate the foundation that nursing programs were built upon.
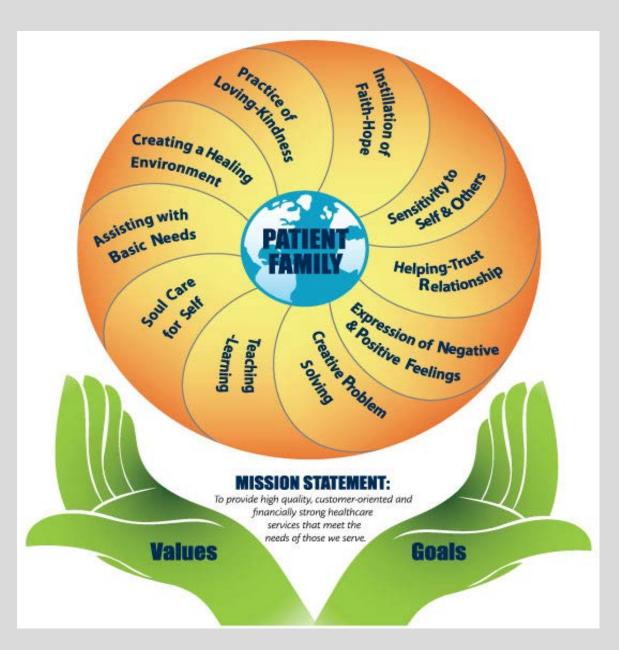
Results

Stressors Identified for Nursing Students:

➢ Stress in clinical environment- some preceptors are not always helpful and students may feel incompetent when they are in the clinical setting.

➢ Faculty- Student Relationships- This was identified as nursing instructors having a unsupportive relationships with students

➢ Faculty incivility and behaviors- Faculty members are only focused on the evaluations and student performances in the clinical setting instead of learning. Additionally, students reported their encounters with faculty as aloof, intimidating, demeaning, arrogant and unfair.

How to improve these stressors:

➢ Peer and staff mentorships and modeling
➢ Caring learning environments
➢ Faculty role and behaviors
➢ Reflective learning model
➢ Social support and professional networks
➢ Empowering students: mindfulness
➢ Proactive learning strategies 3

Conclusion

Nursing is a career that entails an abundance of responsibilities that may produce stress derived from the accountability of a patient's life in their hands and requires not just intelligence but also physical capabilities. A caring learning environment that promotes harmony and supports collaborative engagement of faculty and students is critical to achieve mutual respect as both parties develop professionally. However, due to major stressors identified such as stress in the clinical environment and faculty incivility and behaviors, students encounter a stressful environment within their program. Consequently, if these stressors are not lessened and solutions are not implemented, nursing programs will encounter an increasing drop-out rate or nurse burnout and job dissatisfaction.

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