

Swedish female physiotherapy students have more stress than Dutch female physiotherapy students

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BACKGROUND

Health care students' report high levels of stress with academic pressure as the greatest source.

Physiotherapy (PT) curriculum in Sweden is 3 years (180 EC's) and in the Netherlands 4 years (240 Ec's)

Aim : to determine differences in overall level of stress, stressors and reactions to stressors between PT students at University of Gothenburg(GU) and Hanze University of Applied Sciences (HUAS).

METHOD

We performed a Survey with the Student-life Stress Inventory. The participants consisted of the 2nd year PT students at GU and 3th year at HUAS. Distribution of the questionnaire took place in connection to a regular lecture.

RESULTS

116 students participated, 56 at GU and 60 at HUAS. At GU 13,7 % of the students rated their level of stress as mild, 72,5 % as moderate. The corresponding values for HUAS were 43,9 % and 43,9% indicating a significant difference (P=0.006) between the two Universities (table 1). Students at GU reported a significant higher level of stressors (p = 0.027) and reactions to stressors (p = 0.003), specifically female students at GU. (table 2 and 3)

Table 1: Overall level of stress

Overall level	GU		HUAS		P value
Of stress	N	Mean rank	N	Mean rank	Mann-Whitney U test
All	51	62,26	57	47,55	0.006*
Male	12	20,21	26	19,17	0.765
Female	38	38,47	28	26,75	0.003*

***Significant**

Table 2: subcategories of stressors

Stressors	P value T-Test		
	All	Male	Female
Frustrations	0,516	0,197	0,249
Conflicts	0,060	0,391	0,012*
Pressures	0,000*	0,914	0,001*
Changes	0,340	0,102	0,081
Self-imposed	0,182	0,267	0,173
Total Stressors	0,027*	0,186	0,005*

***Significant**

Table 3: subcategories reaction to stressors

Reaction to Stressors	P value T-Test		
	All	Male	Female
Physiological	0.030*	0,197	0.040*
Emotional	0.001*	0,987	0,045*
Behavioural	0.001*	0,527	0,012*
Cognitive	0.365	0,993	0,283
Total Reactions	0.003*	0,627	0,020*

***Significant**

CONCLUSION

Female Physiotherapy students from GU showed significant higher level of stress, reported a higher level of stressors and reactions to stressors compared to their Dutch counterparts. The implication is that the outcome could have an impact for shortening the curriculum in the education for physiotherapists.



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