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First Semester BSN Students: Cognitive Appraisal & Perceived Stress

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Background

Cognitive appraisal and stress research has been applied to training stressors, creative arts, pregnancy, psychotherapy, academic, and sleep quality (Erschens et al., 2018; Martin, et al., 2018; Gonzalez-Ochoa, 2018; Wersebe et al., 2018; You-wei et al., 2018). The purpose of this investigation was to study the effects of stress and stressors experienced by first semester BSN undergraduate students. The Brief College Student Hassle Scale (BCSHC) measured stressors (Ward & Hay, 2015). Participants rated their school and personal stress levels, and the area most stressful.

Methods

Researchers received 184 completed questionnaires. Since the 20 BCSHC items may not apply to first semester BSN students, exploratory factor analysis principle axis (EFAPa) was used to select underlying factors and items (loadings > .50). Psychometric alpha reliability estimates will be determined for each common factor.

Null Hypothesis 1: The EFAPa will find a one factor solution.

Hypothesis 2: The alpha reliability estimates will be greater than .70.

Hypothesis 3: Using multiple regression with financial factor as the dependent variable and personal and dating-work factors as predictor variables, the outcome will be significantly different from zero.

EFAPa: Common Factors

Personal Stress

Organization of time (7)
Weight (8)
Household chores (9)
Preparing meals (13)

Dating & Work Relationships

Contact with girlfriend/boyfriend (2)
Relationship with people at work (4)
Relationship with girlfriend/boyfriend (18)

Financial Stress

Money for necessary expenses (5)
Owing money (15)
Financial security (17)

Results

Hypothesis 1: EFAPa analysis found three common factors (eigenvalues: 5.773, 2.034, 1.586) based on the scree test accounting for 46.965% of the variance. The three common factors were Personal Stress (7, 8, 9, 13), Dating and Work Relationship Stress (2, 4, 18), and Financial Stress (5, 15, 17).

Hypothesis 2: Coefficient alpha estimates: Personal Stress, .634; Dating-Work Relationships, .721; and Financial Stress, .764.

Hypothesis 3: Using SPSS 25, the overall regression was significant ($F(2,180) = 15.326$, $R = .381$, $R\text{-squared} = .146$, $p = .001$).

Discussion

Explore differential stress effects and alternatives for relieving stress for BSN students scoring high on the three common factors. The next research investigation will incorporate the following alternatives for relieving stress and the effects of stress.

Relieving Stress	Effects of Stress
Aromatherapy Scents	Anger
Call a friend	Anxiety
Deep Breathing	Colds
Eat Healthy	Decrease in School Satisfaction
Exercise	Difficulty Learning
Good Night's Sleep	Difficulty Sleeping
Gratitude Journal	Eating Unhealthy Foods
Guided Imagery	Illness
Hang with Your Pet	Irritability
Join a Religious Community	Migraine Headaches
Listen to Music	Reduction in School Productivity
Massage, Take a Nap	Stomach Ache
Meditation, Yoga, Pilates	Tension Headaches
Talk Yourself Through It	Weight Gain
Progressive Relaxation	Weight Loss
Quiet, Meditative Walk	

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