

9-1-2020

The Positive or Negative Impact of Stress: Exploring Differences Among Sociodemographic Groups

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Recommended Citation

Carlson, Thomas; Reis, Megan; Kruse, Taylor; and Brouwer, Amanda, "The Positive or Negative Impact of Stress: Exploring Differences Among Sociodemographic Groups" (2020). *Student Research and Creative Projects 2020-2021*. 2.

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 - Research Report
 - Presentation
 - Poster
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Note: A copy of the project end product will be forwarded to Krueger Library for archival purposes.

Project Information

Title of Project: The Positive or Negative Impact of Stress: Exploring Differences Among Sociodemographic Groups	
Student Name (Lead): Thomas Carlson	Student Email: tcarlson16@winona.edu
Co-Investigators Names: Megan Reis, Taylor Kruse, Jenna Dale	
Faculty Sponsor: Amanda Brouwer, Ph.D	Faculty Department: Psychology
Date of Presentation: 02/13/2021	Location of Conference: Virtual/Zoom
Event Name: Society of Personality and Social Psychology Virtual Convention	
Was this a capstone, senior thesis, or other degree culminating project? No	

Post-Travel Reminders

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The Positive or Negative Impact of Stress: Exploring Differences Among Sociodemographic Groups

Thomas Carlson, Megan Reis, Taylor Kruse & Amanda M. Brouwer

Winona State University

Perception of stress as positive or negative can differentially affect health outcomes, but little research has explored how differences across sociodemographic groups might explain existing health disparities. Therefore, the experience of stress across different sociodemographic groups was studied. Participants ($N=162$, $M_{age}=38.17$, $SD=12.53$) completed surveys including demographics and the perceived impact of various stressful life events. One-way ANOVAs and independent t-tests were conducted to determine differences in positive and negative evaluations of stressful life events among education, income, and racial groups. Differences in the number of positive and negative stressors were found in education, income, and racial groups. Those with less education and income had more negative stressors compared with those who had more. College educated individuals had more positive stressors than did those with a post-college degree. Whites reported more positive and negative stressors than did minorities. Results suggest that those in different demographic groups do experience the impact of stressful life events differently and interventions could be tailored to address such differences.

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Perceptions of stress can affect health and may explain health disparities. Therefore, the differential experience of stress across sociodemographic groups was explored. Those with less education and income had more negative stressors, college educated individuals had more positive stressors than those with a post-college degree, and whites reported more stressors than did minorities.