

Stress and Mindfulness in Nursing Students



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Objectives

- Identify unique stressors of nursing students
- Discuss the implementation of a MBSR into the junior and senior year of the nursing curriculum
- Identify student perception of mindfulness benefits & uses in class and clinical settings

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Problem

- Stress is the “Epidemic of the 21st Century” (Fink, 2016)
- College students report increasing high levels of stress (Winerman, 2017)
- Nursing students experience more anxiety than other healthcare disciplines (Turner & McCarthy, 2017)
- Student nurses experience unique course related stressors which could lead to attrition

Literature Review

- High stress can impact health, memory, problem-solving, coping, academic performance (Senturak & Dogan, 2018)
- Unhealthy cycle continues (Tagher, 2017)
- Stress management can reduce student nurse stress (Labrogue et al., 2018)
- Mindfulness based stress reduction (MBSR) can reduce stress, increase quality of life & compassion and improve health of healthcare professionals (Taylor, Hageman & Brown, 2016)
- Paucity of research comparing MBSR at different levels in nursing curriculum

Purposes of Study

- Identify level of stress in 2 BSN cohorts at different times in curriculum
- Introduce MBSR
- Identify student perception of mindfulness benefits & uses in class and clinical settings
- Build upon previous research & explore impact of mindfulness on nursing students capacity to provide person-centered care

Methods & Design

- Mixed method study
- Cross sectional survey data collection
- Open-ended questionnaire

Participants

- 116 Completed first survey
- 124 Completed second survey
- 28 Junior 1 students completed Open-ended Questions
- 62 Senior I students completed Open-ended Questions

Instruments

1) The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) (Cohen & Janicki-Deverts, 2012)

- 10 Item Likert Scale
- Measures perception of stress

2) Survey

- Demographics
- 7 Open ended reflective questions

Intervention

- Eight 10-minute mindfulness sessions
- MBSR followed format recommended by the Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care, and Society, University of Massachusetts Medical School (Center for Mindfulness, 2018)



Statistical Methods

- Descriptive Statistics
- Multiple Linear Regression



Demographics

Variables		N =127
Age	18-24 years	51%
	25-34 years	39%
	35-44 years	7%
	45-64 years	3%
Gender	Men	14%
	Women	86%
Ethnicity	White	71%
	Black	21%
	Other	8%
Marital Status	Married	38%
	Single	56%
	Divorced or Separated	6%



Quantitative Findings

Total Stress Score:

Period Observed	Mean of Total Score	Standard Deviation
Beginning of Semester	20.41	6.93
End of Semester	18.69	7.05

Quantitative Findings

Variable	Estimate	SE	P-value
Intercept	19.16	3.26	<0.0001
Age			
18-24	6.51	2.43	0.0080
25-34	5.44	2.28	0.0188
35-44	6.27	2.47	0.0127
45-64	Ref	Ref	Ref
Gender			
Male	-0.69	2.47	0.0127
Female	Ref		Ref
Nursing Course			
Class 1	0.75	1.98	0.7051
Class 2	1.22	1.91	0.5248
Class 3	Ref	Ref	Ref
Ethnicity			
White	1.07	1.56	0.4945
Blacks	0.69	1.74	0.6944
Others	Ref	Ref	Ref
Marital Status			
Married	-5.72	1.99	0.0050
Single	-5.34	2.13	0.0138
Divorced or Separated	Ref	Ref	Ref

Quantitative Findings

- Total stress level higher in the younger age groups when compared to those in the 45-64 year old age range
- Total stress level lower in those who were married when compared to those who were divorced or separated
- Male students had less stress compared to female students

Usefulness Now

- “The sessions gave me the ability to focus better”
- “...gave me time to pause and reorganize”
- “...created a general feeling of calm despite stressors”
- “...used them at night to fall asleep when stressed”
- “I felt very relaxed everytime and felt confident and ready for whatever the day had coming for me”



Usefulness Later

- “When getting overwhelmed take a minute to myself and breathe”.
- When I feel overwhelmed and my brain starts to hurt, I will use mindfulness session to calm my brain.”
- “I will always need it in nursing.”
- “...useful at home processing negative incidences...it was better than eating”



Usefulness in Nursing Practice

- “...take a breather with a difficult patient or after a difficult shift”
- “...if a patient passes away it will help me cope”
- “Personally I will use it to aid patients, especially those with chronic illness.”
- “...it’s important to stop and take a moment to breath and calm yourself in the midst of an overwhelming work day”

Limitations

- Pre and post responses not matched
- Students in two semesters
- Participation voluntary

Conclusion

- Similar levels of stress in in two traditional BSN cohorts
- Increase awareness among faculty of the perception of nursing students stress levels
- Support early intervention for incorporating modalities such as MBSR techniques into the curriculum.

Conclusion

- Identifying younger aged and single students early in the nursing program
- Encouraging students to reach out for support
- Mindfulness at work as a means to improve attention and thus the workplace outcomes, including performance, relationships, and well-being



Questions



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