Stress: Impact on Classroom Engagement and Self Directed Learning

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Conflicts of Interest and Disclosures: Neither the planners or presenters indicated that they have any real or perceived vested interest that relate to this presentation.
Background

- Curriculum revision which included active learning strategies
- Junior students voiced concerns over changes in curriculum and the active learning strategies
- Good practice in undergraduate education include; encourage student-faculty contact, cooperation among students, and active learning (Chickering & Gamson, 1987).
- The objective of Active Learning is to stimulate lifetime habits of thinking to stimulate students to think about HOW as well as WHAT they are learning and to increasingly take responsibility for their own education” (Hatfield, 1995, p. 40).
Background

• Stress has the potential to effect memory, concentration, and problem solving ability which can lead to decreased learning, coping, academic performance, and retention (Goff, 2011).

• The nature of nursing school stressors is multidimensional: students are worried about the clinical (Jimenez, Navia-Osorio & Diaz, 2009); the learning and teaching experience (Gibbons et al., 2008); and fear of failing and monetary concerns (Pryjmachuk & Richards, 2007).
Purpose
• The purpose of this study was to examine student perceptions of stress, and learning strategies used in a junior year of the nursing curriculum.
  • 1. What is the level of stress of junior nursing students?
  • 2. What is the level of self-directed learning readiness of junior nursing students?
  • 3. How are junior nursing students engaging in learning?
Instruments

- The Self Directed Learning Readiness Scale (SDLR) for Nursing Education is a 40 item 5 point Likert scale with 3 subscales: self-management, desire for learning, and self-control (Murray, King, & Tague, 2001).
- Perceived Stress Reactivity Scale (PSRS) is a 29 item scale that quantifies the stress experienced by the junior nursing students (Scholtz, Yim, Zoccola, Jansen, and Schultz, 2011).
- The CLASSEStudent (CLASSE) is a 38 descriptive questionnaire examining student engagement in a course (Smallwood & Ouimet, 2009).
- Demographic Questionnaire is a 21 item tool used to gather information on prior success in college, use of resources, and general demographic data.
Method

- IRB approval
- Two groups – Second semester juniors and first semester juniors (Two different cohorts)
- Students recruited from Medical surgical Nursing I & II class
- Students were given packets to complete
Sample

- 164 juniors total (Fall 2013 = 66; Spring 2013= 98)
- Current GPA: 3.40; range 2.8-4.0
- Age: mean 21.96, range 18-40
- Gender: 11.6% male, 88.4% female
- Race: 78% Caucasian; 12.8% black; 9% some other race
- Marital status: 92.7% single 5.5% married/civil union, 1.8% divorced
Sample

- 51.2% worked
  - Mean 14.19 hours/week with range 1-40 hours/week
- 26% repeated a pre-requisite/elective course
- 9.1% diagnosed with a learning disability
- 40.2% have been to academic support
- 15.2% have been to the counselling center
# Instruments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Reliability (Cronbach’s Alpha)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PSRS</td>
<td>22.96</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>5-40</td>
<td>0.863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDLR</td>
<td>165.9</td>
<td>14.25</td>
<td>136-198</td>
<td>0.810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLASSE</td>
<td>96.96</td>
<td>11.35</td>
<td>68-121</td>
<td>0.897</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results

- **AGE**
  - Hours worked \((p = 0.0, r = .4, n = 86)\)
  - CLASSE total \((p = .001, r = -.267, n = 161)\)
  - SDLR self management subscale \((p = 0.0, r = -.437, n = 65)\)

- **GENDER**
  - CLASSE total \((p = .002, r = 0.245, n = 163)\)
  - SDLR \((p = .03, r = 0.267, n = 66)\)
    - SDLR desire to learn \((p = 0.4, r = .253, n = 66)\)

- **HOURS WORKED**
  - Race \((p = 0.0, r = 0.38, n = 88)\)
Results

• RACE
  • SDLR self-management (p = .031, r = -.267, n = 65)

• SLEEP
  • SDLR total (p = .010, r = .317, n = 66)

• NUMBER OF CHILDREN
  • CLASSE total (p = .006, r = 0.213, n = 163)

• COURSE REPETITION
  • CLASSE educational practices subscale (p = .002, r = -.237, n = 162)
  • SDLR self-management scale (p = .03, r = -.265, n = 65)

• RESOURCE USE
  • CLASSE and tape lectures and listen (p = .002, r = -.239, n = 162)
Results

- GPA
  - CLASSE total \((p = 0.0, r = -0.299, n = 162)\)
    - CLASSE engagement subscale \((p = 0.003, r = -0.245, n = 145)\)
  - Academic support \((p = 0.0, r = 0.314, n = 145)\)
- SDLR
  - CLASSE total \((p = 0.003, r = 0.355, n = 66)\)
  - PSRS total \((p = 0.017, r = -0.293, n = 66)\)
Discussion

- Age
- Hours worked
- Sleep
- At risk students
- Discussion about concerns early in the curriculum, Freshman Seminar & Introduction to Nursing
- Early intervention to be successful
Future research

- Strategies to teach and increase self-directed learning
- Age, gender and racial differences and classroom engagement, stress and self-directed learning
- Stress reduction in nursing students
- At risk students and classroom engagement and self-directed learning.