

Perceived Sources of Stress in the Nursing Program

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ABSTRACT

TITLE:
Perceived Sources of Stress in the Nursing Program

BACKGROUND:
A few researchers have explored stress levels and the sources of stress among nurses in both the university and hospital setting.

OBJECTIVE:
To identify the most prevalent sources of stress in a BSN program and determine ways to overcome those stressors.

METHODS:
Survey questionnaire (mixed method descriptive survey research design)

RESULTS:
The top three perceived sources of stress were exams, clinical paperwork, and lower grade than anticipated.

CONCLUSIONS:
Results from the survey were able to determine the top perceived sources of stress along with interventions that can be implemented to lower stress levels.

BACKGROUND

- There are more stressors and higher stress levels among those in nursing and other health professions. (3)
- Different characteristics of nursing students such as age range, marital status, occupational status, and participation in physical activity are linked to stress. (1)
- Hour-long mindfulness sessions for stress management provided new skills that benefited both personal and professional self-care. (4)
- Coping with stress can be improved with strengthening the self-efficacy, control, and support of the students in the nursing program. (2)

OBJECTIVE

- 1) Identify the main sources of stress for nursing students and understand the most significant stressors that can negatively impact overall student performance
- 2) Determine possible interventions that can be implemented to overcome those stressors and decrease stress levels.



METHODS

- **Design:** Mixed-method descriptive survey research design
- **Inclusion criteria:** senior nursing students in Western Michigan University's BSN program (97 students total)



- **Instruments:** SurveyMonkey platform
 - Questions focused on employment, sleep, academic status, specific sources of stress, support systems, and stress relievers.
- **Dissemination:** Informed consent and survey link disseminated through email.
 - Senior nursing students had 14 days after dissemination to complete the questionnaire.

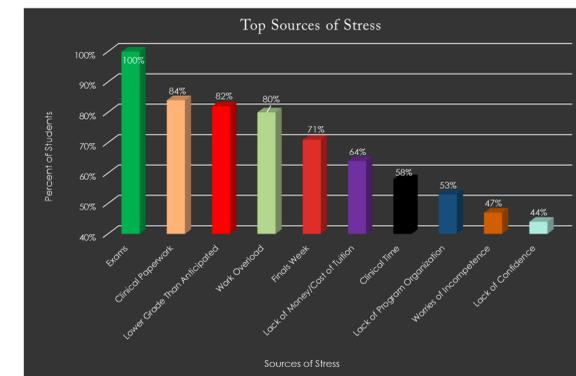


- **Participant Demographics:** 47 total participants fully completed the survey
 - 34 females, 11 males, and 2 undisclosed genders
 - 42 full-time and 5 part-time students

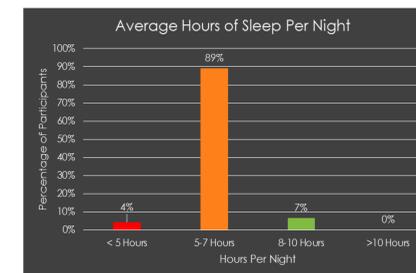
RESULTS

❖ Top Three Perceived Sources of Stress in the Program

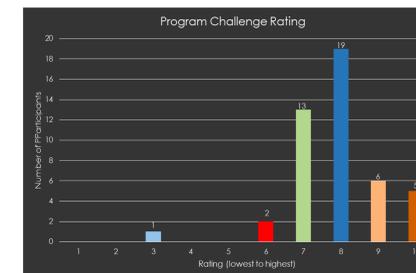
- #1) Exams
- #2) Clinical Paperwork
- #3) Lower Grade Than Anticipated



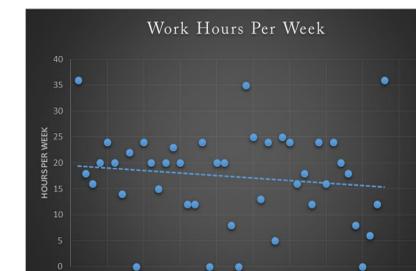
❖ The majority of students get less than 7 hours of sleep per night.



❖ The majority of participants rate the challenge of the nursing program as 8 or higher.



❖ Average work hours per week: 16.6 hrs/week
❖ Minimum: 0 hrs/week
❖ Maximum: 36 hrs/week



RESULTS

Possible interventions to decrease stress levels for nursing students (as indicated by participants):

- **Program Organization**
 - Better staff collaboration/communication
 - Consistency among professors
- **Study Zone & Open Lab**
 - Nursing tutors available
 - Common place for students to work and help each other
 - More open lab hours for students to practice clinical skills
- **Work Load**
 - Quality paperwork over quantity
 - More hands-on practice
 - Practice questions/study guides provided before exams
- **Other Interventions**
 - More scholarships offered for nursing students
 - Learning alternatives for different types of learners
 - Practicing holistic modalities for stress relief in class

CONCLUSIONS

Although the study participants determined the nursing program to be very stressful, possible solutions were also identified. Many of the interventions suggested by the participants correlate with the top perceived sources of stress.

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