

The Relationship between Nursing Student Test-taking Motivation and the Exit Examination Score

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Introduction

Studies reveal that test-taking motivation has a role in test performance. When higher levels of test-taking motivation were identified, higher scores on standardized examinations were more likely to occur. Enhancing nursing students' test-taking motivation can augment the nursing students' performance on the exit examination.

Purpose

A primary objective of nursing programs includes nursing student first-time success on the NCLEX-RN®. As the nursing shortage continues, it is essential to have qualified nursing graduates pass the NCLEX-RN®. An approach some nursing programs have implemented to identify nursing students' probability of success on the NCLEX-RN® includes the administration of an exit examination.

The purpose of this descriptive, correlational study was to investigate if a relationship exists between nursing students' test-taking motivation and exit examination performance.

Methods & Materials

- Convenience sample of 150 senior nursing students in 4 nursing programs.
- Eligible participants included nursing students required to take an exit examination prior to graduating.
- Data was obtained from the nursing students immediately after taking the exit examination.
- The *Student Opinion Scale* was utilized to determine statistical associations between test-taking motivation and the exit examination score.

Results

Medium positive correlation between Total Motivation Score and the exit examination score, $r=.311$, $n=150$, $p<.001$.

Perceived Effort Subscale Scores were moderately correlated with higher exit examination scores, $r=.350$, $n=150$, $p<.001$

Small correlation between perceived Importance of the exit examination and the exit examination score, $r=.198$, $n=150$, $p=.015$.

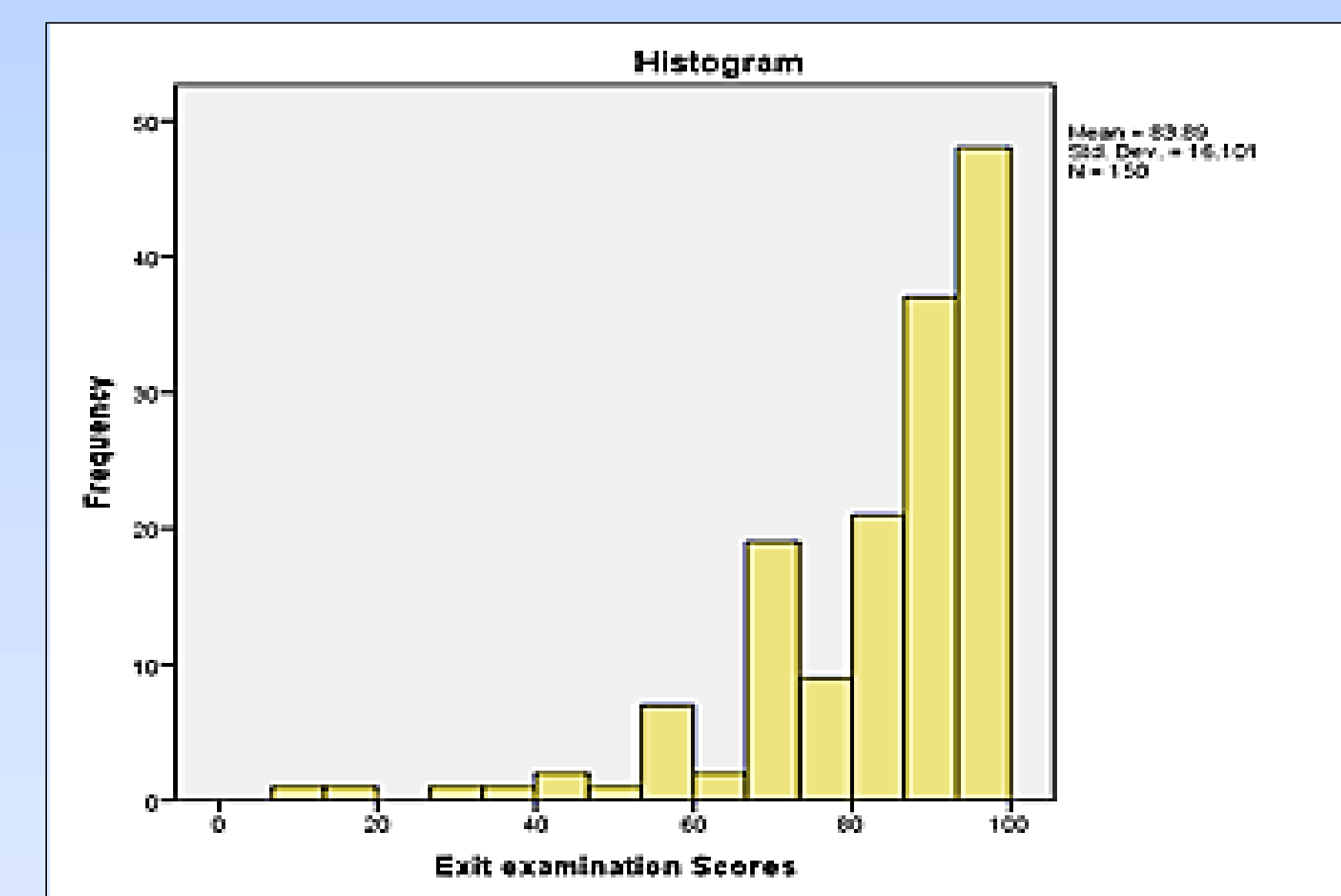
Only demographic variable that resulted in statistical significance was GPA.

- Small positive correlation was noted between GPA and exit examination scores, $r=.292$, $n=148$, $p<.001$

Results

Demographics

- 88% Female ; 90% were Caucasian
- GPAs ranged from 2.5-4.0 ($M=3.37$, $SD .37$)
- Participants ages ranged from 19—46 ($M=26.7$, $SD=6.36$).
 - Majority were 21-25 years old (62%)



Distribution of Exit Examination Scores among the participants

No significant differences between high-stakes and low-stakes exit examination groups and reported levels of Total Motivation, Effort or Importance were identified

A significant difference between the high-stakes and low-stakes groups and exit examination scores ($t(13.5) = 3.25$, $p=.006$) was identified.

- High-stakes group ($M=86.20$, $SD=12.32$)
- Low-stakes group ($M=61.43$, $SD 28.23$)

Conclusion

Nurse Educators

- Accurate interpretation of exit examination scores
- Identify nursing student readiness for NCLEX-RN®
- Importance in enhancing nursing student test-taking motivation

Nursing Programs

- Careful consideration is essential when determining the exit examination stakes
- Determining remediation and progression policies based on the exit examination score.

Limitations

- Study's design cannot imply a casual conclusion
- Convenience sample from one state in US
- Instrument was a self-report tool
- Possible social desirability bias influenced some participants.
- Timing of the administration of the survey

References

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