THE RELATIONSHIP AMONG PERFECTIONISM, PERCEIVED STRESS, AND COPING IN BACCALAUREATE NURSING STUDENTS

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Introduction

- Challenges of nursing school
  - Heavy courseload
  - Competing priorities

- Challenges of nursing practice
  - Transition of the new graduate
  - High attrition rate
  - Nursing shortage

(AACN, 2019; RWJF, 2015)

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Problem

- Many studies identify sources of stress/impact of coping

- Less is known about individual factors that may raise stress and impair coping

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Perfectionism

- High expectations for performance
- Can lead to achievement and success
- Also associated with anxiety and depression (Hewitt & Flett, 1991; Rice & Lopez, 2004)
- Relationship with increased stress and poor coping
- Increasing over time
- Prevalence in nursing students is a gap in the knowledge

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Theoretical Framework

- Lazarus and Folkman's Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping
  - Appraisal of stress (Lazarus & Folkman, 1987)

  - Coping style (Lazarus & Folkman, 1987)

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Methods

- A descriptive correlational design

- Sample
  - Population
  - Exclusion criteria

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Tools

- Short form of the Almost Perfect Scale
  - 8 items
  - Standards (p=0.87) vs discrepancy (p=0.84) (Rice, Richardson, & Tueller, 2014)
- Perceived Stress Scale
  - 10 items (p=0.78-0.91) (Lee, 2013)
- Brief Cope
  - 28 items
  - 14 subscales (p 0.5-0.9) (Carver, 1997)

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Demographics and Stress Scores

- Age – mean 23.75 (SD 4.78) range 19-49

- Gender – 88% (n=162) female

- Hours worked – 56.5% (n= 104) work 1-20 hrs/week

- PSS score – 31.78 (SD 6.49) range 15-46
(National League for Nurses, 2018)

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Findings

- Research question 1: What is the incidence of perfectionism in a group of baccalaureate nursing students?

- Perfectionism categories:
  - Non-perfectionists – 21.2% (n=39)
  - Adaptive perfectionists – 21.9% (n=39)
  - Maladaptive perfectionists – 57.6% (n=106)

  (Rice and Lapsley, 2001)

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Findings

- Research question 2: Is there a difference in the incidence of perfectionism in a group of baccalaureate nursing students by age group?
  - Age groups – under 23 (n=106), 23-30 (n=61), and over 30 (n=17)
  - Chi-Square 10.05, p=0.04
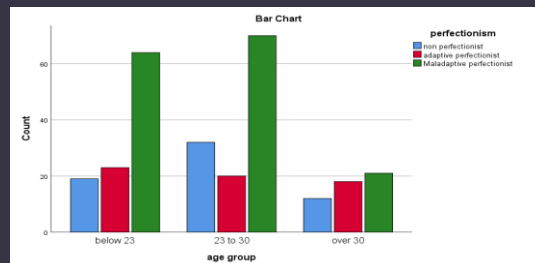
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Findings

- Research question 3: What is the relationship between perfectionism, perceived stress and coping
  - Perceived stress had a moderate positive relationship with perfectionism.
    - $r=0.350$ $p<0.01$
  - Perfectionism and coping
    - Maladaptive perfectionists
    - Adaptive perfectionists
    - Non-perfectionists

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Limitations

- Single site for data collection
- Convenience sampling
- Self-report data collection
- Skewed gender distribution
- Pandemic
- Researcher role in the institution

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Implications for Education, Practice & Policy

- Understanding of Perfectionism
- Screening
- Coping skill development
- Orientation and Residency
- Reduced nurse patient ratios

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Implications for Future Research

- Multiple data collection sites

- Longitudinal study following students into practice

- Exploring interventions

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Questions???

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