Review Article

Anxiety and Coping Strategies: The Adequate and Integrative Review

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Abstract

Stress has become part of students' academic life due to the various internal and external expectations placed on their shoulders. Adolescents are particularly vulnerable to the problems associated with academic stress as transitions occur at an individual and social level. It, therefore, becomes imperative to understand the sources and impact of academic stress to derive adequate and efficient intervention strategies. Understanding the sources of stress would facilitate the development of effective counseling modules and intervention strategies by school psychologists and counselors to help students alleviate stress. Anxiety in nursing students negatively impacts academic as well overall success. This review highlights anxiety and coping strategies in nursing students.

Key words: Anxiety, counseling, coping strategies

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Introduction

Stress contributes to health problems worldwide. Its presence is felt in home, office, industry, and academic environments. It is a common element in life regardless of race or cultural background. The emotional and physical ways in which we respond to pressure can cause mental and physical symptoms. The effects of stress vary with the ways it is appraised, and the coping strategies used differ between individuals and are influenced by ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic characteristics.^[1] Students are subjected to different kinds of stressors such as the pressure of academics with an obligation to succeed, an uncertain future and difficulties of integrating into the system. The students also face social, emotional, physical, and family problems, which may affect their learning ability and academic performance. In recent years there

is growing appreciation of stressors involved in Medical Training College students, especially freshmen, are a group particularly prone to stress.^[2]

The nursing profession is currently in a state of crisis. The number of nurses' available and seeking employment is not meeting the demands of the health-care industry. Nursing education is responding to this need by attempting to increase the number of graduate nurses.^[1] Due to fiscal considerations, restrictions on student to teacher ratios, and limited clinical facilities, it is not always feasible to rely on increasing program size to increase the number of graduates. In many schools of nursing, the focus is shifting from efforts to enlarge nursing programs to strategies to increase the retention of the students who are accepted and enroll in the programs. The National League for Nursing reported an 80% net retention rate in nursing programs across the country, with 83% net retention in public institutions, and 79% net retention in the south.^[3] 20% of the nursing school population that leaves school each year before graduation is a vital element in meeting the demand for nurses in the future.

When in a nursing education program, students are often exposed to high levels of stress when compared to other students in other formalized programs.^[4] In particular, the clinical component of the nursing program which is meant to prepare nursing students for professional nursing roles and enhance their critical thinking and decision-making

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