

STRESS AND EATING PATTERN OF STUDENT NURSES IN UNIVERSITY Z



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ABSTRACT

This study, "Stress and Eating Pattern of the Student Nurses in University Z" is a non-experimental descriptive, comparative research that has the objective to determine if there is a significant difference between stress and eating pattern of student nurses in University Z using Hans Selye's "Stress Theory" as its core foundation.

This study utilized purposive total sampling technique, with 63 student nurses as the respondents.

Results showed that there is a significant difference between stress and eating pattern of student nurses in University Z if grouped accordingly to age, sex, year level, and living condition.

The findings led to a conclusion that stress affects the eating pattern of student nurses in University Z that they eat less as the year level progresses with generally, RLE responsibilities as always stressful for student nurses.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The effect of stress on the pattern of eating food may depend on the condition of the appetite. A human brain sends messages to the adrenal glands to release cortisol. Cortisol tends to increase the appetite as well as crave to eat. It will go back to normal if stress is surpassed. If stress is on hold, cortisol will not decrease and eating pattern continues to change (Vicennati V, et al., 2009, 2012).

Emotional stress may change eating pattern. Changes in eating pattern may indicate; that underlying stress is going on particularly affecting the emotional state. Negative emotions during stress encounter were associated with the dynamics of eating pattern (Mischelsa, N. & et. al., 2012).

Henceforth, student nurses experience daily encounter of stressors in school, family, and people that they are always with. Stress may have an impact on eating in several ways. One may find non-stop chewing, munching, or less. Unconsciously it may lead to emotional imbalance as well as unhealthy eating. Stress in nursing usually comes from emotional demands of pressures like in school or home (Abd El-Aziz, A. & et. al, 2014).

In one of the universities of Cairo, more than 50% of student nurses were documented that the effect of stress is more than the average amount of stress in

the previous 12 months (Abd El-Aziz, A. & et. al, 2014).

In the Philippines, one university studied sixty one student nurses comprising of 21 (34.43%) junior or third year and 40 (65.57%) senior or fourth year students enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program. The result yielded moderate stress when it comes to emotional state (Labrague, L, 2013).

In Davao City, student nurses were affected by stress emotionally due to stressors encountered in a certain environment that tend to change the eating pattern. A research study found that most students regardless of course enrolled, eat compulsively when on stress (Anonymous, 2002).

Most student nurses experience stress because of the things needed to be learned and applied in a given time. Based on the group's experience, some may associate food with comfort, while some don't eat when under stress. Due to some time constraints, student nurses' tendency is not to eat on time, and there are some who would not eat at all. Consequently, the group intended to know the difference on the student nurses' eating pattern considering the time and frequency while emotionally stressed.

Theoretical Framework

The study was anchored to the stress theory of Hans Selye. He explained that the body's demand to stress is being appraised and specific responses are being tested; certain cells in the hypothalamus are being alerted to a state of

emergency. There is a generalized stimulation of the autonomic nervous system during this initial shock phase of the alarm reaction. A nonspecific breakdown of resistance occurs; sympathetic nervous system activity is suppressed, accompanied by a decrease in muscle tone, hypotension, and hypothermia. This response to stimuli, he noted, included (a) the direct effect of the stress on the organism, (b) internal responses that stimulated tissue defense to destroy the damaging threat, and (c) internal responses that caused tissue surrender by inhibiting unnecessary or excessive defense. He noted, "Resistance and adaptation depend on a proper balance of these three factors that occur during the general adaptation syndrome".

There are three phases of stress in the General Adaptation Syndrome to describe the body's response to stress. First is "alarm stage" which releases the hormones called adrenaline, noradrenaline, and cortisol. Thus, fight and flight response to stress is being activated. Second is "resistance stage" wherein the stress level has been reduced. While continue responding to stress, the last stage or "exhaustion stage" finds the body to start losing its' ability to combat the stressors until stress is well defined.

Conceptual Framework

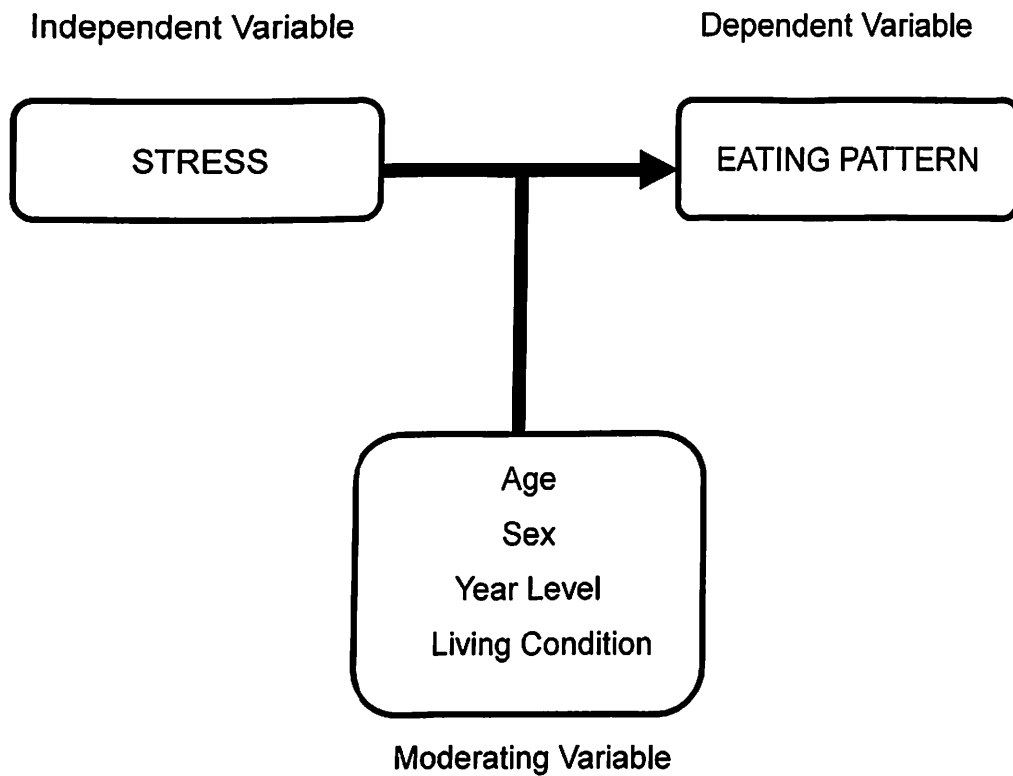


Figure1. Conceptual Paradigm of the Study

Figure 1 shows stress as the independent variable which affects the eating pattern of the 2nd year, 3rd year and 4th year student nurses of University Z who are enrolled in the first semester of school year 2015-2016. The dependent variable being eating pattern is viewed to be either increased or decreased by moderating variables specified as age, sex, year level, and living condition.

Statement of the Problem

This study intended to determine the effect of stress on the eating pattern of student nurses of University Z:

Specifically, this study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:
 - a. Age,
 - b. Sex,
 - c. Year level,
 - d. Living condition
2. What is the frequency of stress of the student nurses per year level in University Z in terms of:
 - a. Feeling pressured and anxious from RLE responsibilities;
 - b. Feeling apprehensive upon knowing area of exposure;
 - c. Feeling tensed from assignment to critical cases?
3. What is the eating pattern of the student nurses per year level in University Z in terms of:
 - a. regular meals;
 - b. between meals after breakfast, lunch, and dinner?
4. Is there a significant difference between stress and eating pattern of the student nurses in University Z?

Hypothesis

Research questions one, two, and three are hypothesis-free.

For research question four, the following hypothesis has been derived:

Ho There is no significant difference between stress and the eating pattern of the student nurses in University Z.

Scope and Limitations

The study was conducted to determine the significant difference between the stress and the eating pattern of student nurses in University Z respectively enrolled in the RLE subject of NCM 101, NCM 103, NCM 106, and NCM 107 for the first semester of the school year 2015-2016 and was only limited to a population of 63 student nurses regardless of age, sex, year level, and living condition.

Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine the significant difference between stress and eating pattern of student nurses in University Z.

This study plays a significant role in the enhancement and development of the following:

School Administrators. The result will give insight to the administrators in

policy making related to stress management and wellness of students.

Faculty Members. Through the study, they may inculcate more health instructive guidelines to promote the value of good eating pattern.

Clinics. The researchers advocate the importance of balanced lifestyle. Furthermore, the researchers' findings may facilitate the clinics to act on a client's need to depart from unhealthy eating pattern through health education.

Nutritionists. Through results of the survey provided herein, they may be empowered to provide analysis and consultation to support clients' healthy dietary habits and eating pattern.

Guidance Counselors. This study may aid them in providing support using a holistic approach while focusing more on stress factors. The study may help them evaluate and apply interventions to succeed with their endeavors academically through guiding student's on how to handle stress, and emotionally through supervising student's reaction to stress. Providing proper information and education provides a good moral tool for self-awareness enhancement.

Student Nurses. This study is deemed to uplift the general public's awareness concerning issues about food and nutrition in connection with stress brought about by different factors. The findings of the study may provide great information to the general populace about outcomes and effects of stress on nutrition and vice versa.

Researchers. The result of the study would help to determine the effect of stress on the eating pattern among the student nurses in University Z.

Future Researchers. The result of the study would serve as their guide and

reference for their research and further improvement of the study.

Definition of Terms

Alarm Stage. In this study, it commences when student nurses are on duty or are tasked with case presentations, oral revalidas, and RLE requirements.

Between Meals. In this study, it refers to the meals taken after breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Eating Pattern. In this study, this refers to the frequency of breakfast, lunch and dinner taken by the student nurses as well as the frequency of the between meals.

Frequency. In this study, it refers to the total number of meals eaten by the student nurses in a day.

Frequency of Stress. In this study, it pertains to how often they are stressed whether: Always, Sometimes, Rarely and Never.

Living Away from Family. In this study, it pertains to the student nurses living in dormitories, boarding houses and apartments or living alone.

Living Condition. In this study, it refers to the students if they are living with their parents, living away from family and living with their relatives.

Meal. In this study, it pertains to breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Resistance Stage. In this study, it refers to how they cope in terms of whether they eat more or eat less.

Snacks. In this study, it means the food intake of student nurses after every meal.

Stress. In this study, it refers to the student nurses' feelings when complying with case presentations, oral revalidas, and RLE requirements. Also, when knowing their assigned area of exposure and when assigned to critical cases.

Student Nurses. In this study, this refers to the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th year student nurses of University Z respectively enrolled in the RLE course of NCM 101, NCM 103, NCM 106, and NCM 107 for the first semester of school year 2015-2016 of University Z regardless of their age, sex, year level, and living condition.

University Z. The institution in this study refers to Ateneo de Davao University.