



6-20-2019

Can Stress Management and Personal Wellness Courses Improve Student Resiliency? A Pilot Study

Aimee Schouten
Brigham Young University

Michael Thomas
Brigham Young University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/jur>



Part of the [Nursing Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Schouten, Aimee and Thomas, Michael (2019) "Can Stress Management and Personal Wellness Courses Improve Student Resiliency? A Pilot Study," *Journal of Undergraduate Research*: Vol. 2019: Iss. 2019, Article 141.

Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/jur/vol2019/iss2019/141>

This ORCA is brought to you for free and open access by BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Journal of Undergraduate Research* by an authorized editor of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.

Can Stress Management and Personal Wellness Courses Improve Student Resiliency? A Pilot Study

JUNE 20, 2019 BY [ADMIN](#)

Aimee Schouten and Michael Thomas, College of Nursing

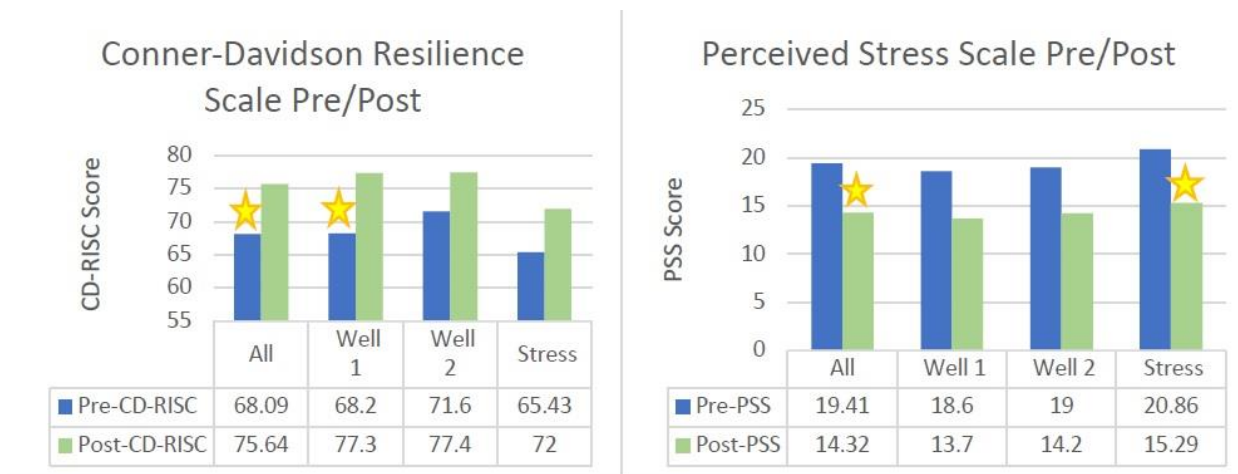
Introduction:

The nursing profession is emotionally and physically demanding. Long shifts, complex and often difficult patients, as well as working in an emotionally challenging environment all contribute major stress for nurses.[1,2] Over time this stress often turns into compassion fatigue. Compassion fatigue and burnout become overwhelming to nurses, leading to physical, mental, and emotional health problems. Compassion fatigue not only negatively affects the nurse but patients as well. Many nurses experience burnout and leave the profession. Resiliency has been shown to be an important factor in retention of nurses as well as positively associated with empowerment among nursing students.[3,4,5] The purpose of this study was to determine whether currently implemented stress management and personal wellness courses effectively enhance resiliency and improve perceived stress levels in undergraduate nursing students at Brigham Young University (BYU).

Methodology:

The study was a longitudinal study using a matched pairs design. IRB approval was obtained. Two measures were used to complete the research. The first was the Connor- Davidson resilience scale (CD-RISC). The CD-RISC is a 25 item self-rated questionnaire. The second test is the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS), which is a 10 item self-rated questionnaire. Students filled out both the CD-RISC and Perceived Stress Scale questionnaires at the beginning of the semester and again at the end of the stress management and personal wellness courses. A paired t-test was completed to evaluate for significant findings between pre-and post-response on the two measures.

Results: A total of 22 participants were included in the study. The mean CD-RISC post-test resiliency scores were significantly higher in comparison to their pre-test scores. The mean PSS post-test stress scores were significantly lower in comparison to their pre-test scores. The overall CD-RISC statistical significance between pre and post test scores was 0.003, and the overall PSS statistical significance between pre and post-test scores was 0.001. Statistically significant scores are starred on the chart below:



Discussion:

Limitations for this study included a small sample size of nursing students. Additionally, both the personal wellness course and stress management course are optional for nursing students to take. Those students who elect to take these classes may be more willing to adapt resilience building and stress management techniques. Additionally, the students enrolled in the courses are from different nursing cohorts. There may be certain semesters of the nursing program that experience more or less stress than the others, thereby affecting their CD-RISC and PSS scores. However, statistical significance was still achieved and results from this pilot study are promising methods of improving student nurse resiliency and perceived stress levels. Additional research needs to be done to validate these findings and prove longitudinal significance of these results and evaluate whether the skills learned in these courses as nursing students carry over into the work place post-graduation.

Conclusion:

Nurses experience a lot of emotional stress in the workplace, often leading to compassion fatigue and burnout. Student nurses also experience a high level of stress at school and during clinical hours. It is critical student nurses learn to be resilient and deal with stress in a healthy, positive way. If student nurses can learn to cope with and lower their own stress, and improve personal resiliency, they may experience less nurse burnout in the work place longterm. The content covered in these two courses at BYU lower student nurses perceived stress levels and raise student resilience scores. The content covered in these courses could potentially be used to improve nurse resiliency and prevent compassion fatigue in the work place, thus leading to greater job satisfaction for nurses and better patient care.

Works Cited:

1. Hooper, C., Craig, J., Janvrin, D.R., Wetsel, M.A., & Reimels, E. (2010). Compassion satisfaction, burnout, and compassion fatigue among emergency nurses compared with nurses in other selected inpatient specialties. *Journal of Emergency Nursing*, 36(5), 420-427.
2. Von Rueden, K. T., Hinderer, K. A., McQuillan, K. A. & Friedman, E. (2010). Secondary traumatic stress in trauma nurses: Prevalence and exposure, coping, and personal/environmental characteristics. 17(4), 191-200.
3. Hodges H., Keeley A. & Troyan P. (2008) Professional resilience in baccalaureate-prepared acute care nurses. *Nursing Education Perspectives*, 29(2), 80–89.

4. Beauvais, A., Stewart, J. G., DeNisco, S., Beauvais, J. E. (2014). Factors related to academic success among nursing students: A descriptive correlational research study. *Nurse Education Today*, 34, 918-923.
5. Pines, E. W., Rauschhuber, M. L., Norgan, G. H., Cook, J. D., Canchola, L., Richardson, C. & Jones, M. E. (2011). Stress resiliency, psychological empowerment and conflict management styles among baccalaureate nursing students. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 1482-1493.

FILED UNDER: [COLLEGE OF NURSING](#), [NURSING PROGRAM](#), [ORCA-2018](#)