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Perfectionism among nursing students

Nursing is a demanding field with constant challenges. Perfectionism has been shown to be a mediator of stress. A comparison of perfectionism among health profession students is lacking, especially among nursing students. Perfectionism can cause maladaptive behaviors that may interfere with a student's education and well-being. The hypothesis used in this study was, nursing students will show a higher rate of perfectionism than the general population. The subjects of this study consisted of a non-probability convenience sample of nursing students at a large United States Western University. The Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (MPS) was utilized to evaluate perfectionism among nursing students in this study. Three specific areas are measured, which includes self-oriented perfectionism, other oriented perfectionism and socially prescribed perfectionism. The data was analyzed by converting MPS survey scores to simple T-scores. The mean scores are set at 50 and the standard deviation is set at 10. The study results revealed 160 (65%) students scored moderate to elevated levels and 118 (48%) students demonstrated elevated levels of perfectionism in the self-perfectionism. In the other-oriented perfectionism category, 123 (50%) students presented moderate to elevated levels and 74 (30%) students demonstrated elevated levels in other perfectionism. The social perfectionism category showed 112 (46 %) students scored moderate to elevated levels and 71 (29%) students that scored elevated levels of perfectionism in social perfectionism category. Educators may be able to adapt curriculum to alleviate stressors of health profession students. Individual instructors need to also become educated on perfectionism, and then help students at risk by providing resources. Instructors should also become mindful on individual classes that may trigger perfectionism in students.

Biography

Jonny Kelly is an Assistant Professor of Nursing at the Weber State University School of Nursing, located in Utah. He teaches courses on the Associate, Bachelors, and Masters level of Nursing.

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