Psychological distress in nursing students: An analytical cross-sectional study

Roa-Díaz Zayne, Parra Dora and **Vargas-Porras Carolina.**
Universidad Industrial de Santander, School of Nursing, Colombia

Depression is a multi-dimensional disorder, among university students the prevalence of depressive symptoms is higher than age-matched populations. This work aimed to identified the prevalence of psychological distress and associated factors among undergraduate nursing students Bucaramanga – Colombia. A secondary analysis was conducted with data from a study exploring the associated factors with student dropouts; a questionnaire inquiring socio-economic, personal and social support was applied. The Hopkins Symptom Checklist (HSCL-10) was used to measure psychological distress with a cut-off score ≥1.85. Univariate, bivariate and multiple linear regression analyses were performed in StataSE-12. Ethical procedures were respected. HSCL-10 score was transformed a logarithmic scale. The sample include 162 students from 2nd to 10th semester, most were women (85%) and single (97%), the mean of age was 21 (SD) ±2.5, the most frequent socio-economic status was 1-2 (51%); 36% reported have a work and 67% declared receive total economic support, 77% were part of an institutional wellbeing program. The prevalence of depression symptoms according to HSCL-10 was 47.5 (IC 95% 39.7 – 55.3). Poor quality in relationship with professors and the presence of physical disease in the last 6 months increase 0.25 (p=0.016) and 0.17 (p=0.000) respectively the natural logarithm units of HSCL-10 averagely. The factors and the important rate of depressive symptoms revealed in these work contribute evidence to the raising awareness about the mental wellbeing in the future healthcare professionals and the necessity of avoiding the adverse effect of this condition to the quality of patient care, patient safety, and professionalism.

zaynemilena6@gmail.com

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