Nursing students’ perceived stress and coping behaviors in clinical training in Saudi Arabia

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Shaher H. Hamaideh*, Hasan Al-Omari* & Hanan Al-Modallal*

Abstract

Background: Clinical training has been recognized as a stressful experience for nursing students.

Aims: The aims of this study were to identify levels and types of stressors among nursing students during their clinical training and their coping behaviors.

Methods: Data were collected using a purposive sampling method from 100 nursing students using a self-reported questionnaire composed of Perceived Stress Scale and Coping Behavior Inventory.

Results: Results showed that “assignments and workload” as well as “teachers and nursing staff” were the highest sources of stress in clinical training. The most common coping behaviors used were “problem-solving” and “staying optimistic”. There was a significant difference in perceived stress among students in regard to the way of choosing nursing. There were significant differences in coping behaviors in regard to the presence of relatives in nursing, living status and mothers’ educational level. The predictors of perceived stress were self-choosing for nursing and the presence of relatives in nursing, while the predictors for coping behaviors were stress from peers and daily life as well as mothers’ educational level.

Conclusions: Nursing teachers and staff are encouraged to develop strategies that decrease level of stress and promote adaptive coping behaviors among nursing students during their clinical training.