

Teacher Support and other Associated Factors as Perceived by Nursing Students

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Dear Editor:

The research article by Tejada (2019) entitled *Health Promoting Lifestyle and Perceived Social Support Measure of Nursing Students in a College of Nursing* focused and highlighted the “least suitable” lifestyles of students. Among these lifestyles, nutrition habits had the worst mean scores which means that students are not employing healthy eating practices. These unhealthy practices are multifactorial in nature which includes individual, social, and university environmental factors (Sogari, Velez-Argumedo, Gomez, & Mora, 2018). Thus, I share the concern of the author on this matter.

Certain socio-demographic variables like family income, history of abuse, mental health, religion, etc., have been found to be associated with malnutrition, particularly obesity in countries like the Philippines (Peltzer, et al, 2014). Therefore, the inclusion of these factors in future studies could potentially give a clearer understanding of the nutrition lifestyle and habits of students. The published article only included age, gender, and the year level as socio-demographic variables.

Noteworthy in the article is how the Perceived Social Support was measured. Perceived support from friends and relatives, and other support groups were measured; but strikingly, the support acquired from teachers was discounted. Measuring this support drawn from teachers is essential in understanding how much of this is actually perceived by the students. There is evidence that teacher support is related to a student's positive or negative academic emotions (Lei, Cui, & Chiu, 2017).

If educators do indeed affect the students' perceived support, then administrators can capitalize on that knowledge by generating precise school policies and interventions. Subsequently, administrators can avoid a trial and error approach when implementing the said policies and interventions. Demir, Burton, and Dunbar (2018) found out in their study that rapport and support from professors are related to student outcomes, but is dependent on the effectiveness of the teachers. This further fuels the need to include the teacher role in future studies. In simple terms, the teacher's role in influencing a student's perceived support cannot be disregarded.

Future researchers may want to explore the relationship between health promoting lifestyle

and perceived social support. The main reason for this is the dearth of literature studying the direct relationship between those two variables. In fact, the article itself fell short of analyzing their relationship.

In summary, the article can be utilized by school administrators as a basis for developing programs aimed at improving health promoting lifestyle of students especially with regard to nutritional habits. Future researchers can capitalize on the need to explore other factors that may influence the students' perceived social support, with extra emphasis on studying the impact of teachers.

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