

An Assessment of the Effective Stress Reduction Methods and Strategies to Promote Emotional Wellness of Second Year Nursing Students from PHCM

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Abstract

This study, titled “An Assessment of the Effective Stress Reduction Methods and Strategies to Promote Emotional Wellness of Second Year Nursing Students from PHCM,” aimed to determine the most effective stress reduction methods and emotional wellness strategies utilized by second-year nursing students at Perpetual Help College of Manila during the academic year 2024–2025. Using a descriptive quantitative research design, data were collected from 85 regular nursing students through non-probability purposive sampling. Modified survey questionnaires adapted from standardized tools, including the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12) for the second part, Brief Resilience Scale (BRS), State Optimism Measure (SOM), and Perceived Social Support Scale for the third part, were utilized to assess respondents’ stress reduction practices and emotional wellness strategies. Findings revealed that the majority of respondents were female and aged 18–20 years old. Among the stress reduction methods, meditation obtained the highest mean score (3.36), interpreted as “Very High,” indicating that students frequently relied on meditation, relaxation, and calming activities to manage stress. In terms of emotional wellness strategies, optimism ranked highest with a mean score of 3.31, suggesting that students maintained positive thinking, hopefulness, and confidence despite academic and clinical challenges. The study concluded that meditation and optimism were the most effective approaches for promoting emotional wellness among nursing students. Based on the findings, the researchers recommended the implementation of wellness programs such as mindfulness activities, yoga, gratitude exercises, positive feedback circles, and student support initiatives to further enhance students’ emotional well-being and stress management.

Keywords: *Stress reduction, emotional wellness, stress management, mental health, nursing education*



1. INTRODUCTION

Stress is a normal psychological and physical reaction to the demands of life. A small amount of stress can be good to motivate nursing students. Nursing students are frequently exposed to various stressors during their nursing training, which may directly or indirectly affect their capacity to learn and carry out the necessary procedures. Additionally, the program is more stressful than other programs due to its practical components, crucial in preparing students to advance into professional nurse roles. The prevalence of stress among practicing nursing students was estimated to be 61.97%, according to the study (Zheng, Yan-Xue, et al., 2022), and this result suggests a high prevalence of psychological stress among practicing nursing students, which is very alarming. The causes were determined to be the following: first, nursing students leave the comfort of the campus and enter an unfamiliar clinical setting; second, there are numerous different nursing procedures; and there is a gap between the theoretical knowledge learned in school and clinical practice, which may put the students under some psychological stress. In addition, a local study (Oducado & Estoque, 2021) investigated undergraduate nursing students' academic performance, stress, and satisfaction with online learning during the COVID-19 epidemic. Online education during the epidemic was considered uncomfortable, if not downright stressful. According to the findings, undergraduate nursing students found online learning difficult (44.4%) and highly stressful (47.2%) during the COVID-19 epidemic.

It is well-known that nursing students often experience higher stress levels than students in other healthcare-related fields. The demanding nature of nursing education, particularly the clinical components, contributed to increased stress levels. Clinical placements and working in a healthcare environment were challenging, as students were exposed to real-life patient care situations, time pressures, and the responsibility of providing safe and competent care. Numerous studies highlighted the prevalence of stress among nursing students, with many reporting moderate to severe levels of stress when working in clinical settings. These stressors significantly impacted the health and performance of nursing students. As stated in the study of Cavioni, V., et al (2020) understanding the factors that contributed to stress and exploring strategies to mitigate its effects was necessary for promoting the well-being and success of nursing students. The Nurse Engagement and Wellness Study (NEWS) examined how different



environmental, social, and behavioral factors came together and impacted the effects of stress on the well-being and performance of nursing students. The objective of the study was to gather information that could be used to develop interventions and support systems that would improve nursing students' involvement, overall health, and ability to bounce back during their education and in their future professional lives.

The study aimed to assess the stress reduction methods and strategies that effectively promote emotional wellness among fourth year nursing students. To achieve this, the researcher will examine five stress reduction methods: meditation, internet usage, eating, physical activity, and seeking support. Additionally, the researcher will explore three strategies for promoting emotional wellness such as optimism, support system, and resiliency.

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study aimed to determine the assessment of the effective stress reduction methods and strategies to promote emotional wellness of second year nursing students when rendering quality of life among the students. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of.
 1. age
 2. year level
2. What are the stress reduction methods of the respondents that promote emotional wellness in terms of the following?
 - 2.1 Meditation
 - 2.1.1.Social media usage
 - 2.2.Eating
 - 2.3.Physical activity
 - 2.4.Seeking support
3. What are the strategies to promote emotional wellness of the respondents?
 - 3.1.Optimism,
 - 3.2.Support system

3.3. Resiliency

4. Based on the research findings, what emotional wellness program is recommended for the respondents?

1.2 SCOPE AND DELIMITATION

This study focuses on the assessment of the stress reduction methods to promote emotional wellness among second year nursing students from Perpetual Help College Manila. The researcher will examine five stress reduction methods: meditation, social media usage, eating, physical activity, and seeking support. Additionally, explore three strategies for promoting emotional wellness such as optimism, support system, and resiliency. The researchers' target population are regular second year nursing students who are enrolled in second semester of academic year 2024-2025.

Adopted questionnaires then modified based on the present study will be used. It will take approximately 5 to 8 minutes to accomplish by the respondents, and upon accomplishing, the questionnaire will be collected.

The sample size will be limited to 85 regular nursing students, those who want to be the respondents and who are willing to cooperate with this study.

1.3. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

By uncovering these insights, the researcher will contribute the results of this study, to the following:

- GUIDANCE COUNSELOR = by understanding practical approaches that could be incorporated in creating programs to support the emotional well-being of student nurses.
- NURSING FACULTY = to mentor students in their academic subjects and to be a parent figure to assist them in overcoming challenges and developing emotional well-being.



- SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS = to create healthy stress-relieving activities that will also give students the confidence they need to succeed in their academics and clinical assignments, graduate, and have successful careers as registered nurses.
- FAMILY MEMBERS of the nursing students, can encourage greater sensitivity in understanding the emotional status of their child.
- FUTURE RESEARCHERS could also utilize the results of this study as a reference for further research on this topic.

2. RESEARCH DESIGN

A descriptive quantitative type of research design will be use in this study. This is appropriate to measure an assessment of the effective stress reduction methods and strategies of 2nd year nursing students of PHCM to promote emotional wellness. Population can be determine by using the non-probability sampling, which is purposive sampling method.

2.1. SOURCES OF DATA

Data being used in the study will be taken from primary and secondary data. These data will be used to support the validity of the study. Primary data includes the data collected using the questionnaire answered by the respondents. While secondary data were gathered through review of related literature and study, reviews of e-journals and articles and past research and dissertations are used as a guide.

1. Population and Sampling

The respondents of this study are regular 2nd year nursing graduates of Perpetual Help College of Manila who are enrolled in 2nd semester academic year 2024-2025. The inclusion criteria are ages between 18 to 23, either male and female and most important is willing to participate and share their insights about the present study.

The researcher uses purposive sampling (non - probability) in choosing the respondents of the study. Among the total 2nd year nursing students, the researcher will utilize Slovin's formula to get the appropriate sample size of the respondents using the margin of error of 5 percent.



2. Instrumentation and Validation

In this study, the researcher will utilize the adopted from then modified survey questionnaire to gather the essential data needed.

The first part of the questionnaire aimed to gather the demographic profile of the nursing students, such as age and sex.

The second part comprises the 15-item questions that were modified from the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12) study and were measured using a 4-point Likert Scale: 4= Always, 3= Often, 2= Rarely, and 1= Never. This part aimed to determine the effectiveness of various stress reduction methods. The respondents rated their answers based on how often they executed the indicated items, using the scale provided by the researcher.

The third part comprised of 15-item questions, and the researchers' adapted questionnaires from the Brief Resilience Scale (BRS), State Optimism Measure (SOM), and Perceived Social Support Scale, with a few modifications based on the present. These questions were also measured using a 4-point Likert Scale: 4= Always, 3= Often, 2= Rarely, and 1= Never. This part aimed to determine the effectiveness of strategies that promote emotional wellness. The respondents will rate their answers based on how often they executed the indicated items, using the scale provided by the researcher.

3. Statistical Treatment

To analyze the data. The following statistical treatment will be employed:

For Research Question 1, Frequency and percentage will be used to determine the number of the respondents who answered in the particular item. The Demographic profile of the respondents will be determined by using the formula of frequency and percentage. For Research Question 2 and 3, the mean and weighted mean formula will be used to determine the sum of all the values that will be collected, that will determine the average percentage of the respondents who answered Always, Often, Rarely, and Never. (both first and second part) of the survey questionnaire.

3. PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The study results are presented below through tables and analysis based on the identified research questions. This includes the frequency result of the demographic profile of the respondents, the mean results of the preferred method for stress reduction, and the strategy in promoting the emotional wellness of the participants.

Table 1.1 Demographic Profile of the Respondents in terms of Age

Age	Frequency	%
18-20 years old	60	70.59%
21-23 years old	25	29.41%
TOTAL	85	100%

Table 1.1 The respondents with the age of eighteen to twenty (18-20) got the highest percentage with seventy point fifty nine percent (70.59%) of the subjects' population, followed by ages twenty-one to twenty three (21-23) with twenty nine point forty one percent (29.41%).

Table 1.2 Demographic Profile of the Respondents in terms of Sex

Sex	Frequency	%
Male	11	12.9%
Female	74	87.1%
TOTAL	85	100%

Table 1.2 shows that the female respondents got the highest percentage taking eighty seven point one percent (87.1%) of the subjects' population, while male respondents got the lowest percentage with twelve point nine percent (12.9%) of the subjects' population.

Table 2.0 Stress Reduction Methods of the Respondents that Promote Emotional Wellness

Stress Reduction Methods	Mean	Interpretation
Meditation	3.36	Very High
Internet Usage	3.01	High
Eating	2.86	High
Physical Activity	2.85	High
Seeking Support	2.66	High

Scale (4): 1.00 - 1.75 Very Low; 1.76 - 2.50 Low; 2.51 - 3.25 High; 3.25 - 4.00 Very High

Table 2 shows that Meditation scored Very High, gaining a mean of 3.36. It was followed by Internet Usage, which garnered a mean of 3.01 (High), followed by Eating, Physical Activity, and Seeking Support, garnering a mean of 2.86 (High), 2.85 (High), and 2.66 (High), respectively. Meditation as a form of stress reduction method in order to clear the mind to cultivate calm, awareness and well-being. The respondents used the following methods such as listening to music, use some other form of relaxation and tend to be quiet and calm.

Strategies in Promoting Emotional Wellness	Mean	Interpretation
Optimism	3.31	Very High
Support System	3.10	High
Resiliency	2.72	High



Table 3.0 Strategies in Promoting Emotional Wellness of the Respondents

Scale (4): 1.00 - 1.75 Very Low; 1.76 - 2.50 Low; 2.51 - 3.25 High; 3.25 - 4.00 Very High

Table 3 shows that Optimism scored Very High, gaining a mean of 3.31. It was followed by the Support system, which garnered a mean of 3.10 (High), followed by Resiliency, which had a mean of 2.72 (High). Optimism, as the best strategy in promoting wellness of the respondents refers to mental attitude characterized by hope and confidence in success and a positive future. The respondents tend to view hardships as learning experiences or temporary setbacks. Despite of the challenges encountered, respondents are still hopeful and confident about the future, things to work out for the best, excited about what lies ahead, that something good will happen in the next 24 hours, and a lot to look forward in life.

Based on these results, Optimism and Meditation both garnered the highest scores. They were found to be highly utilized by the respondents as their strategy for promoting emotional wellness and stress reduction methods, respectively. Thus, based on the research findings, the researcher recommended various health promotion programs that promote emotional wellness, first, through Optimism, which enhances individuals' productivity and communication. Programs that improved Optimism included strengths spotting circles, gratitude rounds, positive role model panels, optimism journaling, and positive feedback circles. Second, through Meditation, which reduces anxiety and increases focus. Programs included: media mirror yoga game, laughter yoga, and shaking.

3. FINDINGS

The researchers observed that there is an unequal distribution of male and female respondents where there are seventy four (74) female and eleven (11) male, equivalent to eighty five (85) subjects. In the study of Graves et al. (2021), it was stated that women reported greater levels of stress than men. Both the individual coping strategies employed, and the coping dimensions showed gender variations. It was discovered that women utilized the emotion-focused coping dimension and supported the use of other coping mechanisms more frequently than men.

Moreover, in terms of age in demographic profile of the respondents, ages eighteen to



twenty (18-20) have the highest frequency of sixty (60), while twenty-one to twenty-three (21-23) got the lowest frequency of twenty five (25). In a systematic study by Liu, J., et al (2022), relating to nursing students' stress, determined that age was found to affect the level of stress perceived by the students. Academic, clinical, and intrapersonal stress were significantly higher in student nurses aged eighteen to twenty (20) years.

Meanwhile, the respondents stress reduction methods that promote emotional wellness, Meditation scored Very High, gaining a mean of 3.36 among the other stress reduction methods mentioned. The respondents highly utilized meditation as a form of stress reduction. According to Van der Riet et al. (2020), mindfulness meditation improves stress, anxiety, sadness, burnout, sense of well-being, and empathy, especially in nurses and nursing students, especially in clinical settings. Also, according to the study of Daniel et al. (2022), meditation is an effective stress management tool that increases the brain's ability to process information.

On the other hand, majority of the respondents used optimism as their strategy in promoting emotional wellness, that scored very high, gaining a mean of 3.31. In the study of Morris, G. (2022), they stressed the importance of optimism as a mechanism with the potential to increase emotional regulation and decrease depression and anxiety. Optimism partially mediated the relationship between emotional regulation, anxiety, and depression and fully mediated the relationship between emotional regulation and study engagement among student nurses. Their study also highlighted the importance of optimism as a mechanism that could translate higher levels of emotional regulation into lower levels of depression and anxiety.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the gathered information collected by the researcher, the analysis shows that the demographic data given by the respondents indicates a more significant number of female than male respondents. Moreover, there are more respondents ages 18-20 are involved in this study.

Meditation scored Very High, gaining a mean of 3.36 among the other stress reduction methods mentioned. The respondents highly utilized meditation as a form of stress reduction method. According to Graves, B. et al (2021), in nurses and nursing students, it was identified that mindfulness meditation improves stress, anxiety, sadness, burnout, a sense of well-being, and empathy, especially in clinical settings. Also, according to the study of Daniel et al. (2022),



meditation is an effective stress management tool that increases the brain's ability to process information that will help to clear the mind to cultivate calm, awareness and well-being. The effective methods that the respondents used are listening to music, use some other form of relaxation and tend to be quiet and calm.

Moreover, Optimism scored very high, gaining a mean of 3.31 among the other strategies mentioned. Optimism as a strategy for promoting emotional wellness was found to be highly utilized by the respondents. In the study of Krifa I. et al. (2022), they stressed the importance of Optimism as a mechanism with the potential to increase emotional regulation and decrease depression and anxiety. Optimism partially mediated the relationship between emotional regulation, anxiety, and depression and fully mediated the relationship between emotional regulation and study engagement among student nurses. Their study also highlighted the importance of Optimism as a mechanism that could translate higher levels of emotional regulation into lower levels of depression and anxiety.

Based on these research findings, the researcher recommended various health promotion programs that promote emotional wellness.

Stress reduction method through meditation, there are different ways that the respondent may perform this. First, mirror yoga games, that provides a fun and effective way to reduce stress, improve focus, and enhance mind-body awareness. Second, is laughter yoga, is a unique and increasingly popular stress reduction method that combines the physical benefits of yoga with the emotional and psychological benefits of laughter. Berdida D.J.E., & Grande R.A.N. (2022) mentioned in their study, physiological effects of laughter reduce the production of stress hormones like cortisol and increases the release of endorphins, which have mood-boosting and pain-relieving effects. It also improves circulation, strengthens the immune system, and relaxes muscle tension. The combination of laughter and deep breathing increases oxygen intake, which calms the nervous system and promotes relaxation For the psychological effects, laughter shifts the focus away from negative thoughts and emotions, promoting a more positive and optimistic outlook. It can also help to reduce anxiety, depression, and feelings of isolation. Lastly, shaking as a meditation to practices that use deliberate shaking or trembling movements to release physical and emotional tension, promoting relaxation and a sense of well-being. According to Aloufi, M. (2021) Shaking can activate the parasympathetic nervous system, which is



responsible for the "rest and digest" response. This helps to counteract the effects of the sympathetic nervous system, which is responsible for the "fight or flight" response. Shaking can help to reduce levels of cortisol, the stress hormone that can facilitate the release of pent-up emotions that can promote a sense of calm and well-being.

On the other hand, strategies in promoting emotional wellness of the respondents in order to achieve optimism are strength spotting circles, gratitude rounds, positive role model panels and positive feedback circles.

Strength spotting circles, meaning the practice of identifying and acknowledging the positive qualities, talents, and abilities of oneself, that shifts the focus from weaknesses to strengths of oneself. Very effective for the individual to boosts self-esteem and confidence, increases motivation and engagement that enhances well-being and happiness. On the other hand, gratitude rounds can also be a powerful tool for cultivating optimism gratitude rounds. As stated by Aloufi, M. (2021) in his study, by regularly acknowledging the good on the person, individuals train their minds to recognize and appreciate positive elements, that leads to fostering a more optimistic outlook. Positive role model panels is another strategy to promote emotional wellness. This strategy fosters a growth mindset, emphasizing the importance of learning, perseverance, and continuous improvement. With this kind of mindset, encourages individuals to see challenges as opportunities for growth, which is essential for optimism. While, positive feedback circles by focusing on strengths and accomplishments of the person to reinforce behaviors and beliefs that contribute to success. According to Graves, B. et al (2021) when feedback is delivered in a positive and constructive manner, it creates a supportive environment where individuals feel valued and encouraged. Therefore, reducing feelings of isolation and increasing confidence will develop on a person.

5. RECOMMENDATION

The researcher found that the respondents mainly utilized Meditation to reduce their stress and Optimism to promote their emotional wellness. With the results of this study, the following recommendations were made:

For the nursing students, explore further strategies that could further reduce their stress, promote their emotional wellness, and enable them to gain more confidence in order for them to



succeed in their chosen profession. Also, it is highly recommended to the respondents to join different student organizations with a safe and comfortable environment that can improve students' social interaction with other students with whom they share the same interests and lessen their stress. Joining student organizations also improves the student's confidence, which is essential for mental and emotional wellness.

For the school administrator, to motivate and encourage more students to create and join student organizations that offer a safe and encouraging environment that will foster social interactions with other students with whom they share the same interests. Conducting more seminars, team-building events, and other distressing activities will be a great help that could promote the emotional wellness of the students.

For the Nursing Faculties, continuously guide the respondents to their studies and be mindful in helping them to promote and prioritize mental health programs and practices available to enhance their emotional wellness. Also, to encourage nursing students to explore more methods and strategies that could reduce stress and promote emotional wellness.

It is also recommended that future researchers further explore other various methods and strategies for stress reduction and emotional wellness. They could also explore the correlation between stress reduction methods and emotional wellness. Also, determine various factors that affect the emotional wellness of nursing students.

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