Oral Defense Announcement
University of Missouri – St. Louis Graduate School

An oral examination in defense of the dissertation for the degree
Doctor of Nursing Practice with an emphasis in Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

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Evaluation of Depression, Anxiety and Stress in Graduate Nursing Students

Date: July 9, 2021
Time: 11:15 to 11:50.
Place: Remote

Abstract
Mental health issues are growing in the United States. Postgraduate school is widely known to increase the level of psychological difficulties (Dyrbye et al., 2006) experienced by students. There is a need to address mental health care in graduate nursing students. This project was a descriptive observational comparison pre-post-intervention design used to see if online modes of delivery would aid in decreasing mental health issues for nursing graduate students. Participants were provided with access to three podcasts and encouraged to use the Sanvello mobile application provided to all students at this university. The first podcast focused on using the Sanvello application, mindfulness and positive thinking, managing stress and incorporating healthy coping habits, the importance of sleep, and healthy eating and movement on mental well-being; the second focused on problem solving skills, setting goals, strategies to overcome barriers, strategies to improve sleep, dealing with emotions in healthy ways, and the importance of nutrition and physical activity; and the third integrated information from the previous podcasts and focused on setting long term goals. It occurred virtually over 12 weeks at a large Midwestern public urban university during the Spring 2021 semester. A convenience sample of 30 nursing graduate students who “opted in” completed the pre intervention survey and 7 students completed the post-survey. These surveys included a demographic survey, healthy lifestyle behaviors, use of Sanvello and the following validated evidence-based scales: the Generalized Anxiety Disorder Scale (GAD-7), Personal Health Questionnaire-8 (PHQ-8), and The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS). Both the pre and post intervention surveys found participants had mild anxiety, mild depression, and moderate stress levels. This project did not result in any statistically significant results; however, the post-intervention survey means of the PHQ-8 and PSS decreased, indicating a clinically significant difference. All post-intervention participants did use the Sanvello application and 85% of those participants found it at least “somewhat helpful”. This result suggests that the Sanvello application could continue to be an effective mental health aid for graduate nursing students. Further research is needed to determine if podcasts could aid in delivering mental health care aid to graduate nursing students.

Defense of Dissertation Committee
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