

Developing a Multidimensional University Student Social Stress Scale

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Abstract

The transition from high school to university can be an especially difficult one for students in the Y or Millennial generation. Over the last several years there has been an increase in reported levels of stress and associated health concerns by students (Bland et al., 2012; Oswalt & Riddock, 2007; Pritchard et al., 2007). As a result, researchers strive to measure stress, and isolate the determinants of stress, however many of the existing inventories are outdated. This study is part of a larger study to develop a Multidimensional Scale which will identify those domains which appear to be the sources of stress for university students. Data was collected from 134 males, and 484 females. The full questionnaire included 127 items in total intending to measure different variables which contribute to university student stress; all questions were measured on a five point Likert scale. Survey items related to social stressors were analyzed using a reliability analysis and a factor analysis in SPSS. Additionally, a confirmatory factor analysis was performed using AMOS. Four factors resulted from this analysis and explained 40.96% of the variance in the scores. They were; peer stress (23.89%), lack of confidence (8.12%), parent stress (5.07%) and romance stress (3.9%). These scores on their own were a good determination of four factors which all serve to contribute to overall student social stress.

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