Occupational and Perceived Stress among Employees in a Mentally Retarded Institution and Other Health Facilities

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The purpose of this study was to discover how high stress within individuals working in mentally retarded institutions and another health-related field such as a hospital varies. It was hypothesized that occupational and perceived stress among individuals working in mentally retarded institutions will be higher than stress among individuals working in a hospital setting. It was also hypothesized that occupational and perceived stress will vary according to gender, number of children, and number of hours worked. The independent variables were the type of institution the participants were employed at, gender, and number of children and hours worked. The dependent variable was the score obtained on occupational and perceived stress surveys. The hypothesis that perceived stress would be higher in individuals working in a mentally retarded institute was found to be statistically insignificant (M=16.43; SD=7.12) with, t (78) =.25, p=.80. Occupational stress was found to be statistically significant (M=2.44; SD=.64) with, t (78) = 2.23, p=.03. The number of children and its effect on perceived stress was found to be statistically significant. Individuals with more than one child had higher levels of perceived stress (M=18.00; SD=5.77) with t (78) = -2.65, p=.01. The effect of children on occupational stress was found to have a trend with individuals with more than one child displaying higher levels of occupational stress (M=2.39; SD=.41) with t (78) = -1.69, p=.09. Employees working 20-25 a week showed higher levels of perceived stress (M=15.81; SD=6.19) with (78) = 1.94, p=.05. After performing a t-test to test the hypothesis in relation to perceived stress a trend between the two genders was found with females having more perceived stress (M=16.86;SD=6.05) with (78) = 1.91, p=.06 than men. Men displayed more occupational stress (M=2.34; SD=.73) with t (78) = -.323, p=.06. An Analysis of Variance was conducted to see how occupational F (2, 77) = 005, p=.995 and perceived F (2, 77) = 1.53, p=.24 stress functions on the basis of an individual’s age. Results did not vary significantly according to the employee’s age base for occupational and perceived stress. This study along with others indicates just how much stress affects individual’s lives on and off the job. Employee and employers should implement stress management techniques to help control stress.
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