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A comparison of traditional and nontraditional college students' stress and its relationship to their time management and overall psychological adjustment

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A COMPARISON OF TRADITIONAL AND NONTRADITIONAL COLLEGE STUDENTS' STRESS AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THEIR TIME MANAGEMENT AND OVERALL PSYCHOLOGICAL ADJUSTMENT

by

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ABSTRACT

The academic demands of college can be strenuous. Nontraditional students in particular may be at risk for role conflict and overload. This study examines levels of academic stressors and reactions to stressors between traditional and nontraditional undergraduate college students in order to investigate the relationships between academic stress, time management behaviors and overall psychological adjustment between the two groups. Participants completed Gadzella's (1991) Student-Life Stress Inventory, Time Management Behaviors Scale (Macan, Shahani, Dipboye, & Phillips, 1990) and the Symptom Checklist- 90 Revised (Derogatis, 1994). Results reveal significant differences between traditional and nontraditional students on a subscale of the Time Management Behavior Scale measuring the ability to set goals and prioritize. Additionally, a marginally significant difference between traditional and nontraditional students was found on another subscale of the Time Management Behavior Scale measuring the mechanics of time management. These results indicate students who maintain multiple life-roles and responsibilities in addition to their role of college student are better at identifying and setting goals that need to be accomplished and prioritizing the tasks required to meet these goals. Furthermore, these students may be more adept at the mechanics involved with time management such as making list and scheduling activities in advance.

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INTRODUCTION

Obtaining a college education can be among the most pivotal experiences a person can have. For many people, a college degree begins a new career path, serves as catalyst for higher wage earnings, and/or simply provides a feeling of satisfaction and personal achievement (Day & Newburger, 2002; Institute for Higher Education Policy, 1998). In addition to these and many other positive aspects of higher education, comes an abundance of stressors. Fehring (1983) notes that the demands of college are strenuous and include long hours of study, deadlines, examinations, lack of sleep, poor eating habits, and personal growth work that often includes the assessment of self, including philosophical and social values. Ong and Cheong (2009) found the top five most frequently reported stressors for college students involved academic workload, too many tests, difficult courses, exam grades, and lecturer characteristics.

Overlying all of the stressors associated with being a college student is the issue of how to manage all of these responsibilities. In fact, time management is among the biggest academic challenges for students (Brown, 1991; Macan, Shahani, Dipboye, & Phillips, 1990; Misra, McKean, West, & Russo, 2000). Macan et al. (1990) reported a significant correlation between measures of stress and perceived control of time, stating that "those who practice time management behaviors are more clear about their role and perceive that they perform better" (p. 767). Similarly, Brown (1991) suggests that students can considerably limit their academic stress by use of effective time management and study practices. Therefore, while academic stressors for college

students can be intense and abundant, time management skills may actually be strongly related to how much stress a student actually experiences.

Misra and McKean (2000) investigated primarily traditional-aged college students' academic stress level in relation to anxiety, time management, and leisure satisfaction. They found that time management behaviors had a stronger impact on reduction of academic stress than did leisure activities. They also found that increases in time management behaviors, such as setting goals and priorities and organizing tasks, reduced behavioral reactions (i.e., crying, irritability, abusing self or others) to stressors and increased cognitive reactions (the ability to think through strategies for handling stressors). Time management behaviors such as planning and scheduling were found to reduce emotional reactions to stressors and increase cognitive reactions. However, Misra and McKean also found that while females had better time management behaviors than males, they also had higher academic stress and anxiety. This finding was in contradiction to their hypothesis that increased time management behavior would be associated with lower academic stress. Another study done by Misra, McKean, West, and Russo (2000) examined academic stress and reactions to stress in college students, using Gadzella's (1991) Student-Life Stress Inventory and found that the most common stressors were due to conflict, pressures, and self-imposed stress and that female students experienced more stressors and reactions to stressors then males. They found no statistical differences in stress among students in varying class standings (i.e., freshman, sophomore, junior, senior).

Despite the many stressors that exist for college students, there are some things that can be done to lessen or minimize those stressors. The effectiveness of time management skills on reducing academic stress has been well documented (Brown, 1991; Macan, Shahani, Dipboye, & Phillips, 1990). Additionally, effective time management skills have also been linked to higher grade point averages (Britton & Tesser, 1991; Lahmers & Zulauf, 2000). Macan et al. (1990) found that increased scores on time management behaviors were associated with less somatic tension, greater satisfaction with job and life, and higher self-reported performance. Students who reported more frequent use of time management behaviors such as making lists, scheduling, and planning also reported having higher GPA's and greater life satisfaction. Kearns and Gardiner (2007) found that students with increased time management behaviors perceived themselves to be more effective workers with higher levels of morale and lower levels of stress.

Issues of stress and time management may be much different for the nontraditional student than for the traditional student. While traditional students face stressors such as being away from home for the first time, adjusting to a more autonomous environment (Hight, 1996), navigating the social transition from high school to college (Fehring, 1983) and dealing with pressure from parents to do well academically (Dill & Henley, 1998); nontraditional students face a different set of stressors. Nontraditional student stressors involve family responsibilities including caring for spouse, children, and/or aging parents; work responsibilities and financial obligations; and they can also be academically unprepared due to separation from

formal education for a number of years (Spellman, 2007). Thus, non-traditional students may face additional stressors and deal with the stressors involved with college differently than traditional college students (Benshoff & Lewis, 1992; Chartrand, 1990; Dill & Henley, 1998; Kim, 2002).

In a comparative study of traditional and nontraditional nursing students, Hight (1996) found that test anxiety rated as the number one source of anxiety in both groups, but nontraditional students actually had been exposed to a variety of teaching techniques through their job, community, and personal experiences, and this experience was beneficial to their learning. In her study on re-entry female students, Jacobi (1987) found that nontraditional students experienced significantly more time constraints and role conflicts than did traditional students. However, the nontraditional students showed significantly less academic stress, reported greater satisfaction with the university, and experienced a significantly smaller number of negative health related symptoms. It has not yet been explored, but it may be that time management is the reason why these nontraditional students with significantly more role and time constraints experienced less stress, greater wellbeing and more satisfaction in the academic role. However, an investigation by Chartrand (1990) revealed that nontraditional students who do not believe they fit with the normative model of a "good student" experience more distress. In her investigation into the personal and academic adjustment of nontraditional students who held two or more major life roles (i.e., employer, partner, or parent) in addition to the student role, Chartrand found that this sub-group of nontraditional

students, those who are committed to the student role yet feel they do not fit the model of a "good student", were at greater risk for distress.

Although Chartrand (1990) included major life roles in her definition of a nontraditional student, much of the past and current research uses only a general age-based categorization of traditional and nontraditional students. Such age-based distinctions of traditional versus nontraditional students typically define traditional students as 18 to 24 years of age and nontraditional students as over the age of 24 (Hight, 1996; Shin, 2005). However, many other factors actually delineate traditional from nontraditional students. In defining a nontraditional student, Kim (2002) included attrition risk factors determined by the National Center for Education Statistics. These involve being financially independent of parents, working full-time, having dependants other than a spouse, or being a single parent. Similarly, Dill and Henley (1998) defined nontraditional students as having multiple roles, i.e., parent, employee, student, and having at least one year between high school and college. Dill and Henley also define traditional students as individuals who do not have multiple roles and enroll in college directly from high school. Similarly, Horn and Carroll (1996) identified a student as nontraditional by the presence of one or more of the following characteristics: delayed enrollment into postsecondary education, part time attendance, financial independence, full time employment while enrolled, dependents other than a spouse, single parenting, or lack of a standard high school diploma. Horn and Carroll further differentiated degrees of nontraditional based on number of the above characteristics held by the student. Students were deemed "minimally nontraditional" when they displayed one of

these characteristics, "moderately nontraditional" with 2 or 3 of these characteristics, or "highly nontraditional" with the presence of 4 or more of these characteristics. For the purpose of this study, Horn and Carroll's characteristics, along with additional characteristics pertaining to life-roles outside that of student, and their degrees of "nontraditionality" will be used, as this will provide a thorough and complete definition and assessment of what constitutes a nontraditional student.

The current study will extend the work of Misra and McKean (2000) to specifically explore academic stress and time management in relation to nontraditional and traditional college students. This research will investigate whether the degrees of "nontraditionality" relate to differences in academic stress and overall psychological adjustment. The results of this study will help to clarify whether nontraditional students are a fairly homogenous group or if their degrees of "nontraditionality" link to differences in academic stress, time management and psychological well being. Additionally, because psychological distress can manifest itself in more than just anxiety symptoms, this study will use a measure that captures symptoms beyond the trait and state anxiety measure used by Misra and McKean. This study begins to explore whether nontraditional students, especially those with higher levels of "nontraditionality," may actually be a particularly high-functioning group of students who use well developed time management skills to offset higher levels of academic and role stress and to minimize actual personal stress levels and other forms of psychological distress. This study makes the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Degrees of nontraditionality (including traditional students at no degree of nontraditionality as measured by Horn and Carroll's degrees) will positively correlate with level of stressors on the Student-Life Stress Inventory Academic Stressors category.

Hypothesis 2: Degrees of nontraditionality will positively correlate with time management ability as measured by the Time Management Behaviors Scale.

Hypothesis 3: Degrees of nontraditionality will negatively correlate with reactions to academic stressors as measured by the Student- Life Stress Inventory Reactions to Stress category and with overall psychological symptoms as measured by the SCL-90-R.

METHOD

Participants

The sample consisted of 213 undergraduate students at the University of Central Florida (UCF). Participants were recruited through the UCF Psychology Department's SONA Systems research participation website, and all participants received extra class credit for their participation. The sample was 84.5% females and 87% of respondents were between 18 and 24 years old. In addition, 40% of respondents fit our standards of nontraditional with 21.1% being "minimally nontraditional", 14.1% being "moderately nontraditional", and 4.7% being "highly nontraditional".

Measures

Four self-report questionnaires were used in this on-line study.

Student-Life Stress Inventory (SLSI: Gadzella, 1991): The Student-Life Stress Inventory is reported in Appendix A. The scale contains 51 items on a 5-point Likert Scale (1 = *never*, to 5 = *most of the time*). The scale measures a students' level of academic stressors and their reactions to stress. The SLSI is broken down into 2 sections and 9 subgroups. The first section assesses academic stressors through 5 subgroups including frustrations, conflicts, pressures, changes, and self-imposed. The academic stressors section of the SLSI contains items such as, *"I have experienced daily hassles which affected me in reaching my goals,"* and *"I have experienced pressures due to an overload (attempting too many things at one time)."* The second

section measures reactions to stressors through 4 subgroups including physiological, emotional, behavioral, and cognitive distress. This section of the SLSI measures physiological and emotional reactions such as sweating, stuttering, headaches, weight loss/gain, fear, worry, anger, and behavioral reactions such as crying, abusing others, and the use of defense mechanisms. Gadzella (1991) reported Cronbach alphas for each subgroup ranging in value from .52 (frustration) to .85 (change). Items were summed to obtain a total score for each of the nine subgroups and subgroup scores were totaled to achieve an overall score. A higher score indicated greater levels of stressors and reactions to stress.

Time Management Behavior Scale (TMB: Macan, Shahani, Dipboye, & Phillips, 1990): The Time Management Behavior Scale is reported in Appendix B. The scale is used to measure various aspects of the students' time management ability. The TMB consists of 46 items rated on a 5-point Likert Scale (1 = *seldom true*, to 5 = *very often true*). Items comprise 4 categories: 1) Setting Goals and Priorities; a sample item from this category is, *"I review my goals to determine if they need revising."* 2) Mechanics; a sample item from this category is, *"I carry a notebook to jot down notes and ideas."* 3) Preference for Organization; a sample item from this category is, *"At the end of the workday I leave a clear, well-organized workspace."* 4) Perceived Control of Time; a sample item from this category is, *"I feel in control of my time."* Coefficient alphas for each category were reported by Macan et al. as follows: 1) .83, 2) .62, 3) .69, 4) .60, and .68 for overall TMB score. The items in each subscale were averaged after reverse scoring and then a total score was obtained by averaging the totals in each subscale.

Symptom Checklist 90 Revised (SCL-90-R: Derogatis, 1994): The Symptom Checklist 90 Revised is reported in Appendix C. The SCL-90-R is used to asses overall psychological adjustment and consists of 90 items rated on a 5-point Likert Scale (0 = *not at all*, to 4 = *extremely*). Items comprise 9 primary categories and 3 overall indicators of distress. The 9 categories are listed, along with coefficient alphas and test-retest reliability (respectively) as follows: Somatization (.86, .86), Obsessive-Compulsive (.86, .85), Interpersonal Sensitivity (.86, .83), Depression (.90, .82), Anxiety (.85, .80), Hostility (.84, .78), Phobic Anxiety (.82, .90), Paranoid Ideation (.80, .86), and Psychoticism (.77, .84), Items from each of the 9 categories were summed to create sub-scores, in addition to 3 total scores for Global Severity Index (GSI), Positive Symptom Total (PST), and Positive Symptom Distress Index (PSDI). Participants were asked to note the level of distress experienced within the previous 7 days on symptoms such as, *"Headaches", "Trouble remembering things", and "Difficulty making decisions"*

Participant Information Form: A participant information form was used to obtain general background information about the participants. Items on this questionnaire were used to gain information pertaining to age, gender, GPA, class standing, and life roles outside that of "student" (e.g., work status, marital status, parental or other caregiver roles). The participant information form is located in Appendix D.

Procedure

Participants were informed that the study was to investigate the well-being of college students. Information was collected online through voluntary, anonymous self-reporting questionnaires. First, participants reviewed and signed an electronic waiver of Informed Consent reported in Appendix E, before they were able to continue with the study. After which they completed the Time Management Behavior Scale (TMB). Immediately following the TMB, participants were asked to complete the Student-life Stress Inventory (SLSI) followed by the SCL-90-R. Lastly, participant demographic information and other relevant information pertaining to this study were collected via the Participant Information Form.

RESULTS

A one –way, between-subjects multivariate analysis of variance was performed to examine the differences among varying degrees of nontraditionality: traditional, minimally nontraditional and moderately to highly nontraditional. Four dependent variables were investigated: academic stressors, reactions to stress, time management behaviors, and overall psychological adjustment. An alpha level for statistical significance was set at .05 for all analyses. Post-hoc analyses were performed using the Least Significant Difference (LSD) approach. No significant differences were found among levels of nontraditionality on the academic stressors or overall psychological adjustment scales. However, a marginally significant difference was found with time management, $F(2,210) = 2.43$, $p = .09$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$. According to the means, traditional students reported the least effective time management behaviors. The means and standard deviations are reported in Table 1.

To explore the differences among students on time management behaviors further, another multivariate analysis of variance was conducted on the 4 subscales for time management: setting goals and priorities, mechanics of time management, preference for organization, and perceived control of time. The means and standard deviations for these subscales are reported in Table 2. The results of this analysis found a significant difference on the Goals subscale, $F(2,210) = 4.24$, $p = .02$, partial $\eta^2 = .04$. Follow up analyses revealed that the source of this variance was the difference between the traditional and minimally nontraditional groups, with a mean difference of -3.7, $p <$

.01. Additionally, a marginally significant difference was found on the mechanics of time

management subscale also between the traditional and minimally nontraditional groups.

No significant differences were found between traditional and moderately or highly

nontraditional groups, although this may be accounted for by small sample sizes in both

the moderately and highly nontraditional groups.

Table 1
Comparison of Stressors, Reactions of Stressors, Time Management Behavior, and overall GSI score from SCL-90-R between Degrees of Nontraditionality

	Traditional (N=72)	Minimally Nontraditional (N=79)	Moderately to Highly Nontraditional (N=62)
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)
Academic Stressors	69.08(13.20)	72.74(10.80)	70.04(13.99)
Reactions to Stressors	66.62(15.57)	68.79(14.06)	66.72(16.52)
Time Management Behaviors	105.23(20.35)	112.35(17.22)	110.29(23.41)
SCL-90R, GSI	.08(.069)	.09(.06)	.08(.06)

Table 2
Comparison of Subscales of The Time Management Behavior Scale between Degrees of Nontraditionality

	Traditional (N=72)	Minimally Nontraditional (N=79)	Moderately to Highly Nontraditional (N=62)
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)
Setting Goals and Priorities	29.79(8.5)	33.53(6.45)	32.35(9.138)
Mechanics of Time Management	28.9(8.42)	32.13(7.382)	30.66(10.52)
Preference for Organization	30.14(6.07)	29.82(5.84)	30.35(5.98)
Perceived Control of Time	16.40(3.84)	16.87(3.33)	16.92(4.21)

DISCUSSION

These findings suggest that students with more life roles and responsibilities are better at overall time management. Specifically, the finding of a significant difference in the subscale for setting goals and priorities between strictly traditional students and those students fitting the model of minimally nontraditional suggests that students with more life-roles and responsibilities (other than standard academic responsibilities) are better at identifying and setting goals that need to be accomplished and prioritizing the tasks required to meet these goals. Additionally, the marginally significant difference on the mechanics subscale suggests that students with more life-roles and responsibilities may be more adept at the mechanics of time management such as making lists and scheduling activities in advance.

The results of this study suggest that time management is crucial for nontraditional students. Contrary to intuition, nontraditional students did not report greater academic stress, greater reactions to stress or lower overall psychological adjustment than did traditional students. It may be that time management is the key protective factor for maintaining well being among nontraditional students balancing many life roles and responsibilities. Although the results of this study can only establish a relationship and further research is required to establish a causal relationship, this is an important step in understanding the adjustment process of students who have to balance multiple roles. Time management is a skill that is within the grasp of new students and can be taught and reinforced by professors and advisors.

A limitation of the present study was the limited number of nontraditional students in the sample. Future research on this topic would greatly benefit from larger sample sizes in the varying groups of nontraditional students. Although there were no significant differences found for the moderately and highly nontraditional groups, this may be accounted for by small sample sizes for these groups. A total of 40% of participants fit our standards of nontraditional; 21.1% of the sample fit the criteria of minimally nontraditional, 14.1% met the criteria needed to be considered moderately nontraditional and only 4.7% of the sample met the criteria for being highly nontraditional. Future research could repeat the survey with more evenly distributed participants in each of the groups. Furthermore, comparing time management behaviors and academic stress between the nontraditional students may help to increase our understanding of this diverse population of students. It would be valuable to see if the results found in an expanded sample suggest that time management is a protective factor for all levels of nontraditionality or if there may be a level at which stressors from the larger number of life roles take over despite even the best time management efforts. For instance, it might be hypothesized that while minimally nontraditional students show more effective time management behaviors than traditional students; highly nontraditional students could be so inundated with additional life roles that, despite their best efforts at time management, they simply have too much to manage and therefore would show a decrease in effective time management behaviors as shown in Figure 1.

Increased Time
Management
Behaviors

Traditional   Minimally Nontrad   Highly Nontrad
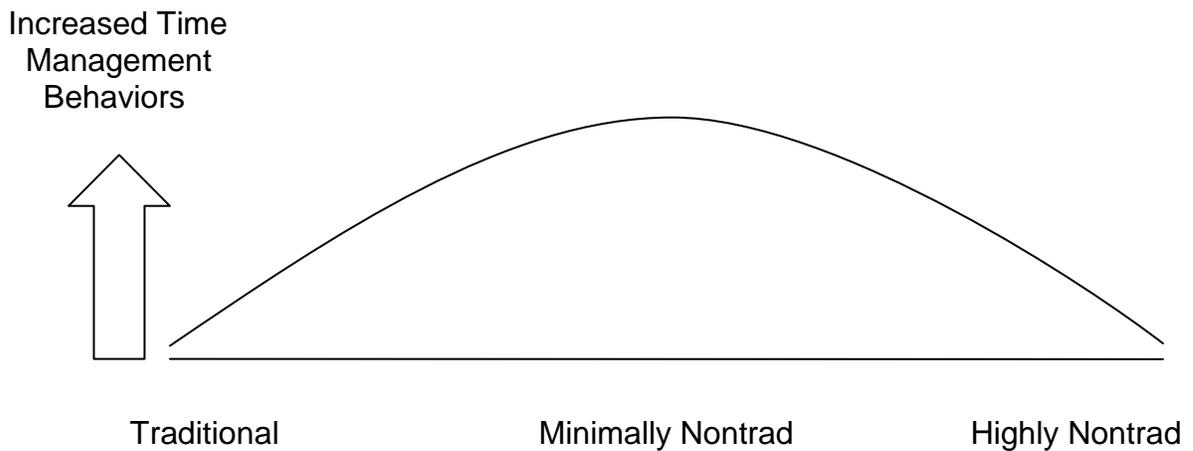
Figure 1
Possible Trends in Time Management Behaviors between Traditional and Nontraditional
College Students

Despite its limitations, one of the highlights of the current study is its approach to

defining the nontraditional student. This study attempted to advance the customary

standards of categorizing traditional and nontraditional students by age. Historically,

college students would only be considered nontraditional if they were over the age of 24

years. However, would we consider a 23 year old single mother of 2 a traditional college

student? Furthermore, should a 25 year old graduate student who is not married, has no

children or outside employment be considered nontraditional simply because they are

over the age of 24? Therefore, the current study moved away from the simplistic age-

based definition by using a more substantial method of categorizing students as

nontraditional.

With major changes occurring in our economy in recent years and increasing

competition in the workforce, many adults are finding it necessary to enter or re-enter

the postsecondary education system (Matthews, 2009). Thus, the number of nontraditional college students will continually be increasing. Certainly, colleges and universities will benefit from an increased understanding of this growing population of students. Additionally, all students will benefit from awareness of the importance of time management skills. Students who are impacted by less than optimal time management skills can be encouraged to strengthen these skills through student success seminars, self-help information, and/or academic counseling. Advisors and faculty who work closely with students can refer students to time management skill-building resources.

APPENDIX A: STUDENT-LIFE STRESS INVENTORY (GADZELLA, 1991)

STUDENT-LIFE STRESS INVENTORY (GADZELLA, 1991)

1 – Never   2 – Seldom 3 – Occasionally 4 – Often   5 – Most of the time

Stressors

A. As a student:

1. I have experienced frustrations due to delays in reaching my goals.

2. I have experienced daily hassles which affected me in reaching my goals.

3. I have experienced lack of sources (money for auto, books, etc.)

4. I have experienced failures in accomplishing the goals that I set.

5. I have not been accepted socially (become a social outcast).

6. I have experienced dating frustrations.

7. I feel I was denied opportunities inspite of my qualifications.

B. I have experienced conflicts which were:

1. Produced by two or more desirable alternatives.

2. Produced by two or more undesirable alternatives.

3. Produced when a goal had both positive and negative alternatives.

C. I experienced pressures:

1. As a result of competition (on grades, work, relationships with spouse and/or friends).

2. Due to deadlines (papers due, payments to be made, etc.)

3. Due to an overload (attempting too many things at one time).

4. Due to interpersonal relationships (family and/or friends expectations, work responsibilities).

D. I have experienced:

1. Rapid unpleasant changes.

2. Too many changes occurring at the same time.

3. Changes which disrupt my life and /or goals.

E. As a person:

1. I like to compete and win.

2. I like to be noticed and be loved by all.

3. I worry a lot about everything and everybody.

4. I have a tendency to procrastinate (put off things that have time to be done).

5. I feel I must find a perfect solution to the problems I undertake.

6. I worry and get anxious about taking tests.

Reactions to Stress

F. During stressful situations, I have experienced the following:

1. Sweating (sweaty palms, etc.).

2. Stuttering (not being able to speak clearly).

3. Trembling (being nervous, biting fingernails, etc.).

4. Rapid movements (moving quickly from place to place).

5. Exhaustion (worn out, burned out).

6. Irritable bowls, peptic ulcers, etc.

7. Asthma, bronchial spasm, hyperventilation.

8. Backaches, muscle tightness (cramps), teeth-grinding.

9. Hives, skin itching, allergies.

10. Migraine headaches, hypertension, rapid heartbeat.

11. Arthritis, over-all pains.

12. Viruses, colds, flu.

13. Weight loss (can't eat)

14. Weight gain (eat a lot)

G. When under stressful situations, I have experienced (emotional):

1. Fear, anxiety, worry.

2. Anger.

3. Guilt.

4. Grief, depression.

H. When under stressful situations, I have (behavioral):

1. Cried.

2. Abused others (verbally and/or physically).

3. Abused self (used drugs, etc.).

4. Smoked excessively.

5. Was irritable towards others.

6. Attempted suicide.

7. Used defense mechanisms.

8. Separated myself from others.

I. With reference to stressful situations, I have (cognitive appraisal):

1. Thought about and analyzed how stressful the situations were.

2. Thought and analyzed whether the strategies I used were most effective.

APPENDIX B: TIME MANAGEMENT BEHAVIOR SCALE (MACAN, SHAHANI, DIPBOYE, & PHILLIPS, 1990)

TIME MANAGEMENT BEHAVIOR SCALE (MACAN, SHAHANI, DIPBOYE, & PHILLIPS, 1990)

A – Seldom true   B – Occasionally true   C – True about as often as not
D – Frequently true   E – Very often true

Setting Goals and Priorities

1. When I decide on what I want to accomplish in the short term, I keep in mind my long-term objectives.

2. I review my goals to determine if they need revising.

3. I break complex, difficult projects down into smaller manageable tasks.

4. I set short-term goals for what I want to accomplish in a few days or weeks.

5. I look for ways to increase the efficiency with which I perform my work activities.

6. I finish top priority tasks before going on to less important ones.

7. I review my daily activities to see where I am wasting time.

8. During a workday I evaluate how well I am following the schedule I have set down for myself.

9. I set priorities to determine the order in which I will perform tasks each day.

Mechanics of Time Management

1. I carry a notebook to jot down notes and ideas.

2. I schedule activities at least a week in advance.

3. When I find that I am frequently contacting someone, I record that person's name, address, and phone number in a special file.

4. I block out time in my daily schedule for regularly scheduled events.

5. I write notes to remind myself of what I need to do.

6. I make a list of things to do each day and check off each task as it is accomplished.

7. I carry an appointment book with me.

8. I keep a daily log of my activities.

9. I use an in-basket and out-basket for organizing paperwork.

10. I find places to work that will allow me to avoid interruptions and distractions.

11. If I know I will have to spend time waiting, I bring along something I can work on.

Preference for Organization

1. At the end of the workday I leave a clear, well-organized workspace.

2. When I make a things to do list at the beginning of the day, it is forgotten or set aside by the end of the day.

3. I can find the things I need for my work more easily when my workspace is messy and disorganized than when it is neat and organized.

4. The time I spend scheduling and organizing my workday is time wasted.

5. My workdays are too unpredictable for me to plan and manage my time to any great extent.

6. I have some of my most creative ideas when I am disorganized.

7. When I am somewhat disorganized I am better able to adjust to unexpected events.

8. I find that I can do a better job if I put off tasks that I don't feel like doing than if I try to get them done in the order of their importance.

Perceived Control of Time

1. I underestimate the time it will take to accomplish tasks.

2. I feel in control of my time.

3. I must spend a lot of time on unimportant tasks.

4. I find it difficult to keep to a schedule because others take me away from my work.

5. I find myself procrastinating on tasks that I don't like but that must be done.

APPENDIX C: SYMPTOM CHECKLIST 90 REVISED (DEROGATIS, 1994)

SYMPTOM CHECKLIST 90 REVISED (DEROGATIS, 1994)

0–Not at all   1–A little bit   2–Moderately   3–Quite a bit   4–Extremely

How much were you distressed by:

1. Headaches

2. Nervousness or shakiness inside

3. Repeated unpleasant thoughts that won't leave your mind

4. Faintness or dizziness

5. Loss of sexual interest or pleasure

6. Feeling critical of others

7. The idea that someone else can control your thoughts

8. Feeling others are to blame for most of your troubles

9. Trouble remembering things

10. Worried about sloppiness or carelessness

11. Feeling easily annoyed or irritated

12. Pains in heart or chest

13. Feeling afraid in open spaces or on the streets

14. Feeling low in energy or slowed down

15. Thoughts of ending your life

16. Hearing voices that other people do not hear

17. Trembling

18. Feeling that most people cannot be trusted

19. Poor appetite

20. Crying easily

21. Feeling shy or uneasy with the opposite sex

22. Feelings of being trapped or caught

23. Suddenly scared for no reason

24. Temper outbursts that you could not control

25. Feeling afraid to go out of your house alone

26. Blaming yourself for things

27. Pains in lower back

28. Feeling blocked in getting things done

29. Feeling lonely

30. Feeling blue

31. Worrying too much about things

32. Feeling no interest in things

33. Feeling fearful

34. Your feelings being easily hurt

35. Other people being aware of your private thoughts

36. Feeling others do not understand you or are unsympathetic

37. Feeling that people are unfriendly or dislike you

38. Having to do things very slowly to insure correctness

39. Heart pounding or racing

40. Nausea or upset stomach

41. Feeling inferior to others

42. Soreness of your muscles

43. Feeling that you are watched or talked about by others

44. Trouble falling asleep

45. Having to check and double-check what you do

46. Difficulty making decisions

47. Feeling afraid to travel on buses, subways, or trains

48. Trouble getting your breath

49. Hot or cold spells

50. Having to avoid certain things, places, or activities because they frighten you

51. Your mind going blank

52. Numbness or tingling in parts of your body

53. A lump in your throat

54. Feeling hopeless about the future

55. Trouble concentrating

56. Feeling weak in parts of your body

57. Feeling tense or keyed up

58. Heavy feelings in your arms or legs

59. Thoughts of death or dying

60. Overeating

61. Feeling uneasy when people are watching or talking about you

62. Having thoughts that are not your own.

63. Having urges to beat, injure, or harm someone

64. Awakening in the early morning

65. Having to repeat the same actions such as touching, counting, or washing

66. Sleep that is restless or disturbed

67. Having urges to break or smash things

68. Having ideas or beliefs that others do not share.

69. Feeling very self-conscious with others

70. Feeling uneasy in crowds, such as shopping or at a movie

71. Feeling everything is an effort

72. Spells of terror or panic

73. Feeling uncomfortable about eating or drinking in public

74. Getting into frequent arguments

75. Feeling nervous when you are left alone

76. Others not giving you proper credit for your achievements

77. Feeling lonely even when you are with people

78. Feeling so restless you couldn't sit still

79. Feelings of worthlessness

80. The feeling that something bad is going to happen to you

81. Shouting or throwing things

82. Feeling afraid you will faint in public

83. Feeling that people will take advantage of you if you let them

84. Having thoughts about sex that bother you a lot

85. The idea that you should be punished for your sins

86. Thoughts and images of a frightening nature

87. The idea that something serious is wrong with your body

88. Never feeling close to another person

89. Feelings of guilt

90. The idea that something is wrong with your mind

APPENDIX D: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION FORM

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION FORM

Please provide complete responses to the following:

Age: _____

Gender: Male____   Female____

Class Standing: Freshman____ Sophomore____   Junior____   Senior____

Current GPA: _____   Declared Major: _____

Student Status this semester: Full Time____   Part Time____

Do you have a: High School Diploma____ GED____   Other_____

Did you begin college directly after high school?   Yes____   No____

If No, how many years after high school did you begin college?_____

Can you be claimed as a dependent on your parents' (or others') taxes? Yes___ No___

Work Status this semester: Full Time____   Part Time____   None____

Marital Status: Married____   Divorced/Separated____   Single____

If Married, is your spouse supportive of your role as a student?   Yes____   No____

Number of Children: 0____1____2____3____4____More than 4_____

Ages of Children: _____

Are you a single parent?   Yes____   No____

If Yes, does your child(ren)'s other parent assist you either financially or physically?

        Yes____   No____

Do you have any other dependents or caregiver roles (elderly parent, disable relative,

etc.)?   Yes____   No____   If yes, how many? _____

Are you a homeowner (have a mortgage)?   Yes____   No____

Do you have any unpaid activities that you are committed to (volunteer work, children's

school/social activities, etc.)?   Yes_____   No_____

APPENDIX E: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

EXPLANATION OF RESEARCH

Title of Project: *College Students' Well-being*

Principal Investigator: *Karen Mottarella, Psy.D.*

Other Investigators: *Debra Stagman, Shannon Whitten, Ph.D.*

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Whether you take part is up to you.

- **Purpose of the research study:** The purpose of this study is to investigate the well-being of college students.

- **What you will be asked to do in the study:**   You will be asked to complete four surveys pertaining to your academic stressors, reactions to stress, time management behaviors, general well-being, and asked to provide demographic information such as age, gender, university class status, marital status, outside work status, non-traditional vs. traditional status.

- **Time required:** We expect that this study will take up to 1 hour to complete.

You must be 18 years of age or older to take part in this research study.

There are no expected risks to you for participating in this study. However, some people become anxious or upset when answering questions about their behaviors and well being. If you believe you need counseling, please contact the UCF Counseling Center; http://counseling.sdes.ucf.edu/

To make an appointment: (407) 823-2811 or Email councntr@mail.ucf.edu

Study contact for questions about the study or to report a problem: If you have questions, concerns, or complaints, talk to Dr. Karen Mottarella, Building 3 Room 226, Psychology Department, University of Central Florida Palm Bay Campus. Dr. Mottarella

IRB contact about your rights in the study or to report a complaint: Research at the University of Central Florida involving human participants is carried out under the oversight of the Institutional Review Board (UCF IRB). This research has been reviewed and approved by the IRB. For information about the rights of people who take part in research, please contact: Institutional Review Board, University of Central Florida, Office of Research & Commercialization, 12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501, Orlando, FL 32826-3246 or by telephone at (407) 823-2901.

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