

Project 1: Understanding Distress and Well-being amongst Adults with Diabetes

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Research Purpose: The project aims to explore the relationship between perceived distress, well-being and perceived competence. The thesis is interesting as it adopts a positive psychology framework through the perceived competency variable to examine feelings of distress reported by diabetes sufferers.

Research Description: A web-based survey has been operational on the departmental website for several months and there is now a reasonably large data set for the student to use. All participants have diagnosed diabetes and have completed a web-based survey of demographic details and three standardised self-report inventories- Diabetes Distress Scale, the Well-being Questionnaire and the Perceived Competence Scale..

The particular theories that the student is expected to draw upon or theories that have been used to develop the proposed project include

the Biopsychosocial model and perceived competence research by Ryan and Deci (2000). The research by Diener is helpful background in understanding the Distress/well-being variables in the study. There is considerable research in this area and the student will not have difficulty locating appropriate research articles and information.

There is no data collection required as the design and selection of variables has already been made.

Key variables include
Perceived competence, well-being, distress, diabetes.

Participants: Somewhere 150-200 participants have already completed the questionnaire. Most participants who have completed the on line survey come from Queensland and were alerted to the study by Diabetes Australia which supported the research. The student will not play any role in recruitment as the data comes from an already existing data study.

Methodology: The following questionnaires have been used in the archival study:

1. Diabetes Distress Scale
2. Well-Being Questionnaire
3. Perceived Competence Scale
4. General Demographics

The survey is on the web-site coordinated by the Psychology Technical staff and is still open but will be closed soon as the data set is already rather large. Given this the student will not play any role in data collection.

The data base was originated by a postgraduate student in the MPsychology program. She contacted with Diabetes Australia to

support the research and she arranged the necessary permissions for use of scales not in the public domain. The student will benefit from reading this postgraduate thesis.

Data Analysis:

Broad type of analysis (i.e., quantitative/qualitative)
Quantitative only. The student should be reasonably independent and competent in their understanding of quantitative statistics. All statistical analysis would have been covered in the Honours and Undergraduate program.

The student will be expected to perform data screening, checking psychometric properties of questionnaires, separating participants into particular groups based on questionnaire responses, plus run correlations and regression.

As an archival data set is being used the student is expected to create an SPSS data file by downloading the data from the web, naming items and checking the directionality of scoring for each item (several require reversal).

Student friendliness:

This project is suitable for either an external/on campus student. Supervision expectations will vary according to the stage of the project and be negotiated between student and supervisor.

Expected research outcomes: Definite conference presentation/paper if student is so motivated.

Further reading:

Gonder-Frederick and others (2002). Diabetes and behavioral medicine: The second decade. *Journal of Consulting & Clinical Psychology*, 70(3), 611-625

Ethics:

This acts as a check for the supervisor

- Ethical approval will be sought by supervisor; or
- * Ethics approved.

Resources:

This acts as a check for the supervisor

- * Project able to be funded within \$150 departmental limit
 - Project not able to be funded within \$150 departmental limit – additional funds will come from:
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