

# Selected abstracts from unpublished works

## **CHILDREN'S HEALTH ORIENTATION FOLLOWING SURGICAL REPAIR OF A CONGENITAL HEART ANOMALY**

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The problem for investigation was to determine implications for children's health-related behavior following surgical repair of a congenital heart anomaly. This was determined by the relationship among three personality constructs and factors involved in cardiac health care monitoring. The three personality constructs were locus of control, perceived vulnerability to health problems, and salience of health. The immediate purpose was to explore the relationship among the concepts in the problem, and the ultimate purpose was to generate hypotheses for future research.

The theoretical basis of the study was a conceptual framework that was developed

by the researcher on the basis of Becker's health belief model and Gochman's theories of vulnerability.

This descriptive study design was correlational, and factor relating and sample selection was sequential. The sample consisted of 50 children between 8 and 18 years of age; the number of boys and girls was approximately equal. The subjects were interviewed while waiting to see the cardiologist during a regularly scheduled clinic visit. Data were collected by means of an interview schedule and the hospital record. A statistical analysis was done, with  $P \leq .10$ .

The findings showed that 82% of the sample had locus of control scores indicative of internally controlled behavior and perceived vulnerability scores which suggested that the sample subjects perceived themselves to be slightly more vulnerable to health problems than a comparison norm. Health was salient for all subjects, but 48% of the sample did not wish to be as healthy as they could possibly be.

Correlations were carried out on the data in accordance with the research questions. Locus of control, perceived vulnerability, and salience of health were not found to be related in any combination. A significant positive correlation was found between increasing numbers of health care treatments and diagnostic tests, and perceptions of increased vulnerability to health problems. Increasing salience of health scores was also found to be significantly related to increasing numbers of health care treatments.

The relationships of the three components of salience of health with the other personality constructs and the modifying factors and situational variables were also

explored, and a number of correlations were identified.

The data were used to draw implications for the children's health-related behavior. One could speculate on the basis of the high percentage of internally controlled response scores and the tendency toward perceptions of increased vulnerability to health problems that the internal subjects who perceived themselves as vulnerable would have a tendency to take appropriate preventive action. These subjects would also have a tendency to seek early and prompt diagnosis and comply with health care treatments. The subjects were found to also have an awareness of the anatomy of their defect, its effects, and the process of their health care.

Examination of the findings relative to the conceptual framework indicated that the interplay of the personality constructs should be explored, especially with regard to their additive effect. Rationale for the high frequency of internally controlled responses was discussed, and concerns about the ability of young children to distinguish between the concepts of "chance" and "desire" were expressed. The validity of the salience of health measurement was also discussed.

## **A STUDY OF KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES OF SELECTED NURSING STUDENTS TOWARD HUMAN SEXUALITY**

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Previous research has indicated that the incorporation of human sexuality in the nursing curriculum is of considerable