

The Effect of Exam Anxiety on Blood Pressure and Heart Rate in Paramedic Students

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Abstract- In this study, we aimed to investigate the effect of the anxiety on blood pressure and heart rate in pre-exam period. For this purpose, 83 paramedic first class students (19.2±1.0 year old) were included. The blood pressure and heart rate were measured in the morning (07.00-08.00) and in the evening (17.00-18.00) for 3 days during the prereview, review and exam periods. Prior to examination, the Westside Test Anxiety Scale questionnaire was used to measure anxiety. The score range is from 11-55 point were used for anxiety. The systolic blood pressure and the diastolic blood pressure record respectively when there was prereview period were 104.6±9.0, 63.7±7.2 mmHg which increase to 108.7±8.5, 67.5±6.7 mmHg in the review period (p<0,01, p<0,001). The prereview period systolic blood pressure and diastolic blood record respectively were 104.6±9.0, 63.7±7.2 mmHg which increases to 108.2±8.2, 67.1±6.1 mmHg in the exam period (p<0,01, p<0,001). The heart rate observed in the prereview period was 92.7±12.4 beats/min which increases to 98.6±13.5 beats/min in the review period (p<0,001). On the other hand, heart rate in the prereview period (92.7±12.4 beats/min) significantly increase when compared in the exam period (100.6±13.8 beats/min, p<0,001). The heart rate, systolic and diastolic blood pressure observed in the review period there were no significant different from the record observed when the exam period. There were significant differences between anxiety score in the females when compared males (p<0,05). This means, females anxiety score were higher than males. There were significant differences between anxiety score and exam phobia (p<0,001). It shows that those who have exam phobia have higher anxiety score. No significant difference was found between old, smoking status, number of siblings, monthly income, place of residence and anxiety score. There were significant differences in the exam period systolic blood pressure and heart rate, review period diastolic blood pressure when compared the anxiety group (p<0,05). The blood pressure and heart rate increase in the review period and exam period, exam anxiety is an important factor for blood pressure and heart rate increase.

Keywords- Exam anxiety, blood pressure, heart rate, student.