

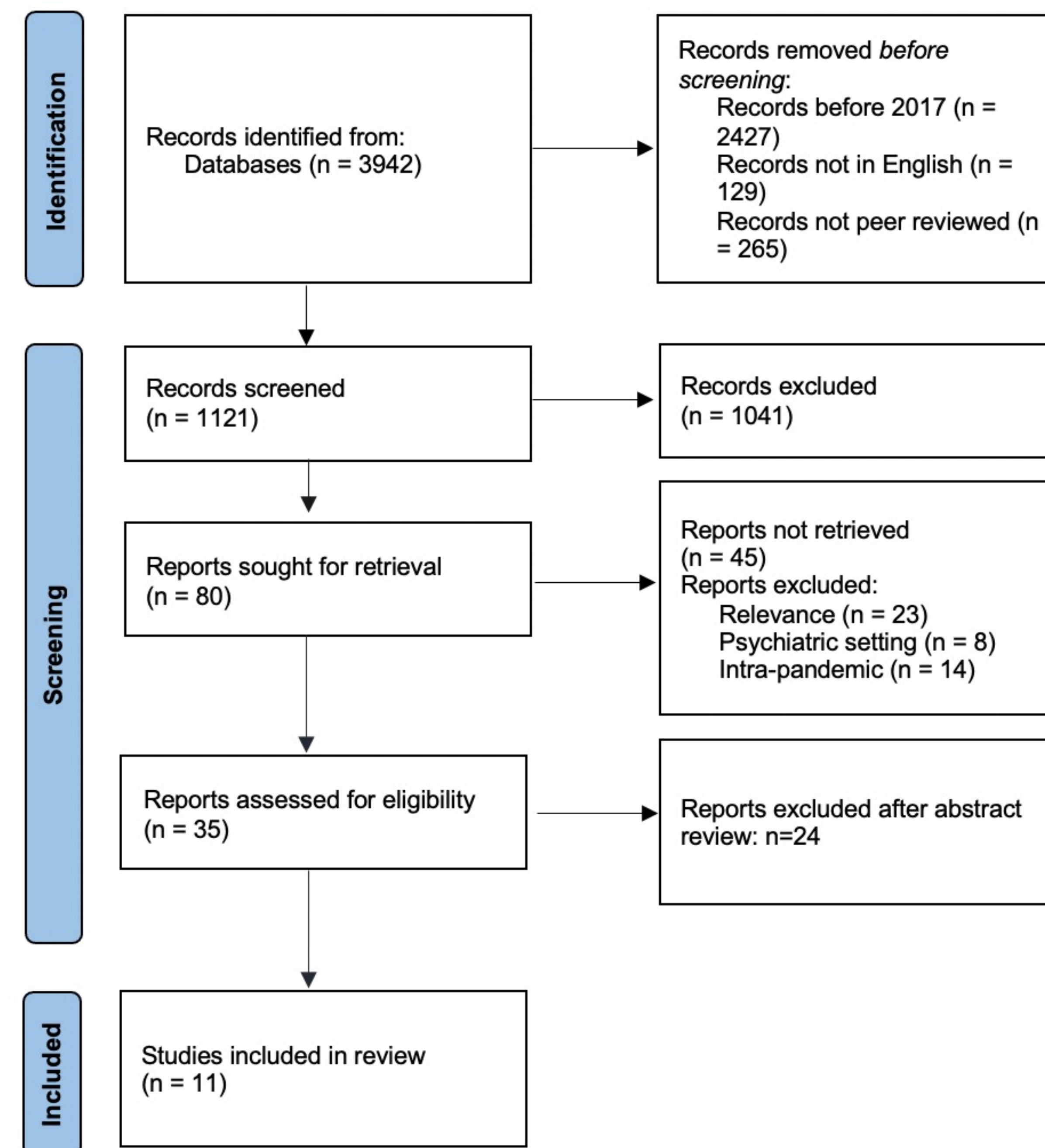
Mental Health of University Nursing Students: A Literature Review

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Background

- Nurses are more successful in promoting health in patients when they have healthy mental and physical lifestyles
- Nursing students are at risk for high stress levels. There is a need to promote health in the future nursing workforce
- There is a need for research and interventions to combat the rising levels of mental health issues
- Goals of the review in nursing student population:
 - How prevalent are mental health issues?
 - What are the health behaviors and coping mechanisms observed?
 - What interventions are successful?

PRISMA Diagram



Nursing Implications

- Further studies should be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of courses and assignments that target self care, mindfulness, coping strategies, and improving mental health overall
- Studies show it is possible and effective for nursing students to have the option of a stress/coping course as an elective in a nursing program.
- If further research solidifies the effectiveness of courses, universities can integrate such classes into their program
- Resources can reduce stress, burnout, and doubts of pursuing the career

Methods

- Electronic search was conducted in the CINAHL database in January 2023
- Inclusion eligibility: published between 2017 and 2023, English language, and peer reviewed
- Key search terms used: “nursing student” and “mental health”
- Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) Diagram



Mental Health Levels

High symptoms of stress and feelings of rejection and inadequacy.

Resilience scores lower in nursing students compared to the general US population.

Contributing factors: heavy workload, several semesters into program, and thoughts of dropping out or giving up on nursing.



Health Behaviors

Nursing student population was overweight with low levels of physical activity.

Price and availability of fresh foods are a main barrier to eating healthy.

Smoking, diet, sleep practices, and binge drinking are main problem areas.

Ineffective coping mechanisms and barriers to seeking help.



Effective Interventions

Stress coping course consisted of a two hour a week elective. Includes concepts such as the physiology of stress, stressors, burnout, and coping methods.

Course provided through lectures, discussion, games, and role play.

Effective in increasing resilience and provides resources for students.

Findings

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