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Your Feelings are Valid: Initiating Awareness of Anxiety and Treatment in College Students

Problem:
UMR undergraduate students living on and off-campus are experiencing extremely high levels of anxiety, thus putting them at a greater risk of developing mental health disorders.
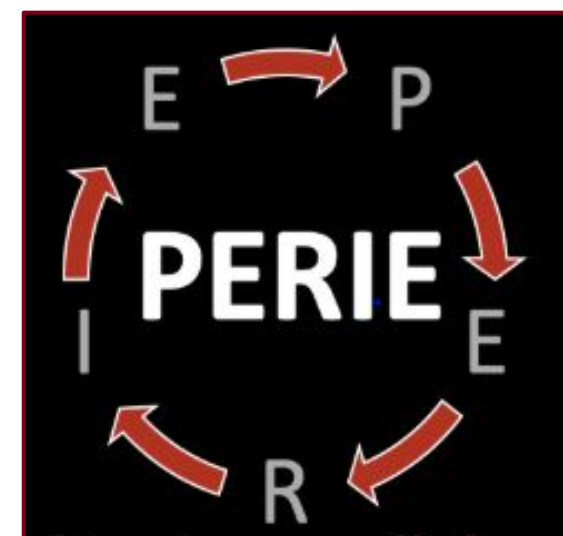

Fig 1: PERIE Process - Problem, Etiology, Recommendations, Implementation, Evaluation

Background:
❏ PUBH2561 students used the evidence-based PERIE Process to examine mental health issues among college students.
❏ Anxiety accounts for 58.9% of all presented concerns to college counseling center clients. [3]
❏ In 2019, 20.1% of undergraduate students surveyed would not consider seeking help from a mental health professional despite experiencing a concerning personal problem. [1]
❏ A gap exists between mental health needs of U.S. university students and help that they receive. [2,7,9,16,17,18]
❏ Barriers such as peer pressure and social stigma prevent students from advocating their concerns and receiving deserved quality mental health services. [1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,16,17,18]
❏ Unmet psychological needs can increase risk of other mental health disorders, negatively impacting their social, academic, and occupational performance. [1,17]

Helpful Existing Efforts - Other Colleges:

❏ Semester-long sleep hygiene course focused on decreasing anxiety and depression. [5]
❏ Digital mental health interventions and online therapy for college students.[8]
❏ Mental Health Kiosks to increase awareness of mental health. [7,16]

Key Recommendation:
: UMR must establish a mental health counseling initiative to address high anxiety levels experienced by UMR students by establishing: 1) Readily accessible, private, high-quality student on campus counseling available everyday, 2) Online access to mental health counseling through UMTC's counseling services, and 3)Promotion of the counseling option awareness.
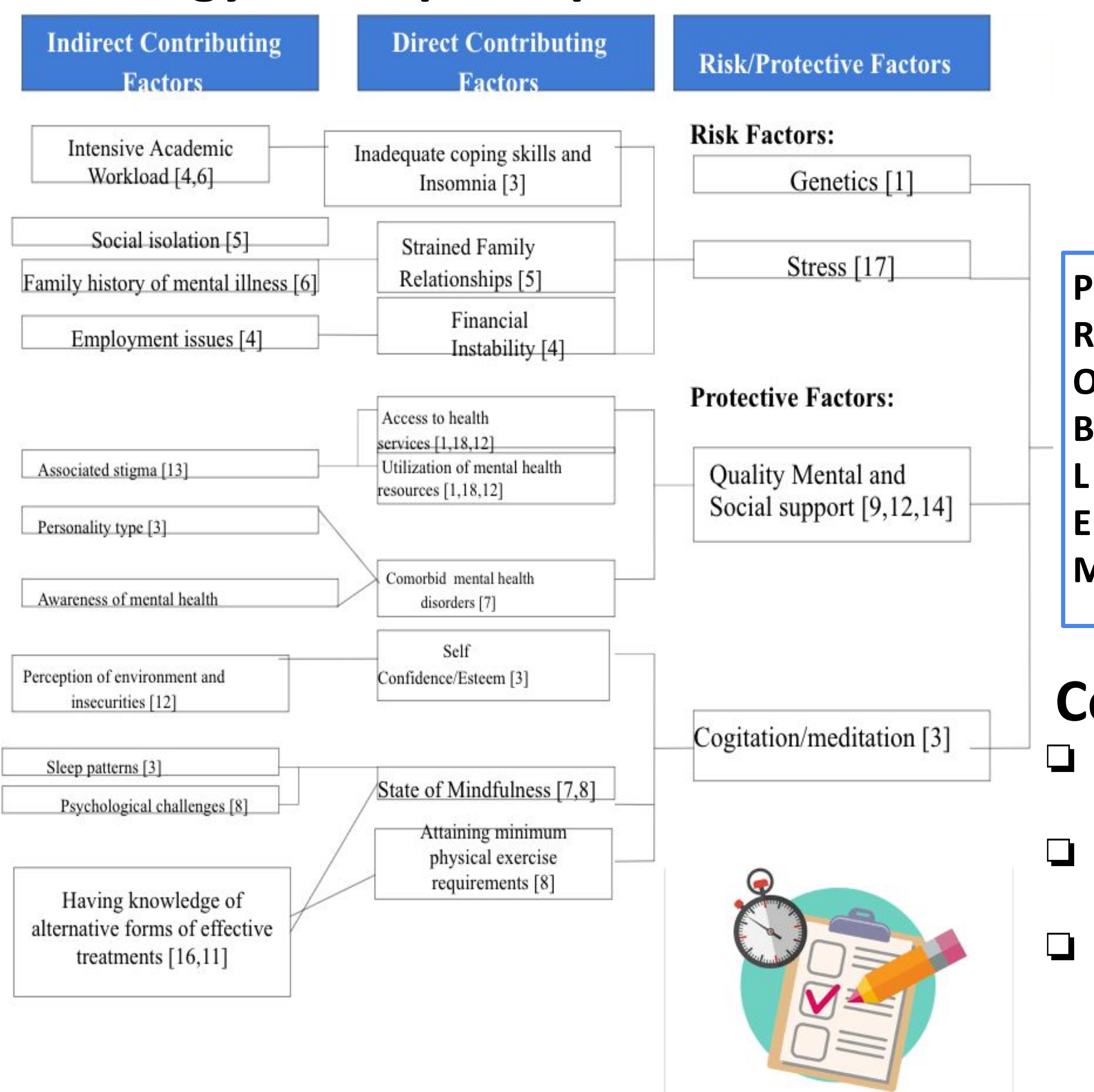
Etiology Concept Map:

References:
For a full reference list, click this hyperlink.

UMR-Specific Intervention:
❏ Increasing mental health counseling walk-in and scheduled services availability everyday by engaging all counselors.
❏ Advocate for access to UMTC online counseling.
❏ Prevent the development of a student wide mental health crisis by providing all UMR students predisposed to developing mental health disorders the mental health services they need to achieve academic, professional, and interpersonal success.

Evaluation Plan:
❏ Step 1: Gather data on the current student use of UMR counseling services.
❏ Step 2: Administer student surveys focused and identify current barriers.
❏ Step 3: Implement intervention, gather data on student use post intervention, and administer follow up student surveys on effectiveness of UMR's mental health services pre/post intervention.
❏ Step 4: Compare student utilization of and perceived impact pre/post intervention with counseling representatives, identify weaknesses and strengths, and formulate new solutions to observed intervention flaws.

Conclusions & Next Steps:
❏ Evidence-based approach: Impactful and innovative public health initiatives.
❏ 1) Apply for funding, increase awareness on campus, and initiate the hiring process
❏ 2) Provide training program, administer student surveys on effectiveness of current UMR mental health services, student needs, and current barriers, collect data on current use of UMR counseling services
❏ 3) Implement intervention, administer follow up student surveys, and gather quantifiable data data post implementation of intervention.