

MEASURING OCCUPATIONAL STRESS OF NURSES IN PRIVATE HOSPITALS

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Abstract Occupational stress happens when a job's requirements aren't met by the employee's resources, skills, or needs. This can make you feel bad and make your body feel bad in the working environment. In the past decades, it has been brought up as a big problem over and over again. Some people say that being a nurse is one of the most stressful occupations. When nurses are stressed and depressed, it impacts how they and their organizations work, as well as the care they give. There are a lot of things at work that can make nurses feel stressed. Some of these stressors are about the person, while others are about the workplace, the way the organization is set up, or how they talk to service users. The major objective of this study is to measure the level of stress among nurses who are working in private hospitals. The expanded nursing stress scale is being used in this study to measure how stressed out the nurses are. The nurses who work in private hospitals in Tirunelveli were asked to fill out the structured questionnaire. For the study, 120 nurses who work in private hospitals were chosen at random to find out how stressed they are. This study found that nurses are stressed at work due to death of patients, problems with their peers and supervisors and workload.

Keywords: Stress, Occupational Stress, Nurses, Healthcare, ENSS, Hospitals

INTRODUCTION

People who work in health care, like nurses, doctors, and hospital administrators, have to deal with stress every day. Stress at work has big direct and indirect effects in the profession. It mostly has indirect effects on job satisfaction, mental health and well-being. Among various categories of employees working in healthcare sector, Nurses might be a patient's best friend. Even though they get paid to do their jobs, the care and concern they show for their patients is unmatched and, most of the time, more important than any money they might get. There are times when nurses are under a lot of stress, which can lead to bad work environments that take away their spirit and enthusiasm for their jobs. So, unhappy workers could lead to burnout, which has been linked to stress in healthcare workers like nurses and is seen as a risk for people who do "people work."

Stress at work is a rapidly cause of illness and injury at work, especially among people who work in healthcare. Occupational stress is a key sign of mental illness because it can cause due to depression and anxiety when people have to deal with a lot of deaths and long shifts with a lot of unknowns and demands. Stress at work and satisfaction on job are the two important factors that affect the productive of a workforce. It's important to keep health care workers, especially nurses, happy with their jobs if you want high-

quality medical care. There is a lot of evidence that the way things are changing in the workplace could hurt the satisfaction of the employee in that job. Job satisfaction is the way an employee feels about the job. It has two parts: positive and negative affectivity. Positive affectivity is shown by enthusiasm, high energy, and involvement that is enjoyable, while negative affectivity is shown by distress, involvement that is not enjoyable, and edginess. Occupational stress is an important part of job satisfaction. It acts as a mediating factor; it will lead to satisfaction, creativity, and less boredom. If it acts as a negative factor, it will result in aggression and dissatisfaction in job. Further, being happy at work may protect employees from stressors and help control stress. So it is necessary to investigate the occupational stress of nurses in the healthcare sector.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study is focusing on measuring the stress level of the nurses using expanded nursing stress scale. The structured questionnaire was used to collect data from the nurses working in private hospitals in Tirunelveli. The questionnaire was structured with socio-demographic characteristics like age, education, marital status, years of experience, work hours in a day, and shift duties of the nurses and expanded nursing stress scale to measure the stress level of the nurses.

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The Expanded Nursing Stress Scale (ENSS) was adapted from French et al., 2000 which is a valid and reliable tool to measure nurses' stress. This scale consists of 57 variables grouping under 9 factors on a five-point Likert scale. The collected data were statistically analyzed using SPSS program. The variables were loaded with 9 factors i.e., death and dying, conflict with physicians, inadequate emotional preparation, problems with peer support, problems with supervisors, workload, uncertainty concerning treatment, patients and families and discrimination. 120 sample respondents were selected for the study to measure the stress level among nurses working in private hospitals.

Research Question

What is the significant relationship between the levels of stress with factors of ENSS?

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Occupational stress is when an employee is unable meet

the demands in a job don't with one's own resources, skills, and needs. This can lead to negative emotional and physical reactions. It is a response to several bad things about the work itself, the way it is organized, and the place where it is done. Over the last few decades, it has constantly been called out as a major problem. It has been said that nursing is one of the most stressful jobs. Stress on nurses affect their work, organisational image and the care they give to patients. There are many things that can cause nurses to feel stressed at work. Some of these stressors have to do with the person, while others have to do with the workplace structure. Therefore, this study measures the stress level of the nurses working in private hospital. The socio-demographic characteristics shows that 67% of them are in the age of between 25 to 30 years, 73% of them are married, 81% has completed B.Sc nursing, 63% of them having less than 5 years of experience, 72% of the nurses are working 9-12 work hours in a day, and 88% of the nurses are working in the shift system. The following table describes the level of stress among nurses working in private hospitals.

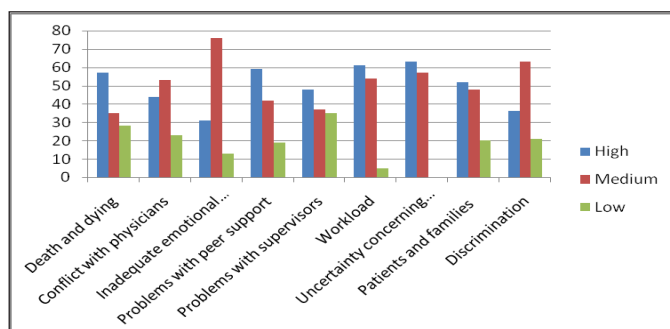
Table 1: Measuring the Level of Stress using Factors of ENSS

Factors	High	Medium	Low	Total
Death and dying	57 (47.5%)	35 (29.17%)	28 (23.33%)	120 (100%)
Conflict with physicians	44 (36.67%)	53 (44.16%)	23 (19.17%)	120 (100%)
Inadequate emotional preparation	31 (25.83%)	76 (63.34%)	13 (10.83%)	120 (100%)
Problems with peer support	59 (49.17%)	42 (35%)	19 (15.83%)	120 (100%)
Problems with supervisors	48 (40%)	37 (30.83%)	35 (29.17%)	120 (100%)
Workload	61 (50.83%)	54 (45%)	05 (4.17%)	120 (100%)
Uncertainty concerning treatment	63 (52.5%)	57 (47.5%)	-	120 (100%)
Patients and families	52 (43.33%)	48 (40%)	20 (16.67%)	120 (100%)
Discrimination	36 (30%)	63 (52.5%)	21 (17.5%)	120 (100%)

Source: Computed Data

Nurses are highly stressed due to uncertainty in concerning treatment i.e., physician ordering improper treatment to a patient, the physician not present in a medical emergency, feeling training provided in education and work place are inadequate, not knowing how to communicate with the patient and their family about the status of the syndrome and treatment, being exposed to hazards, even sometimes scheduled as in charge without having adequate experience, uncertainty about the medical treatment, success ratio of the operation and functioning of equipment and fear of treatment. Also because of inadequate emotional preparation i.e., feeling unprepared with the emotional needs of the family and having no answer to the patients. It shows that young nurses who are having less than 5 years of experience are emotionally not prepared to deal with their patients and families. Fig. 1 clearly states that, nurses are stressed in their working environment due to death and dying, problems with

peer group members and supervisors and workload. Nurses are moderately stressed due discrimination at work place.



Source: Computed Data

Fig. 1: Measuring the Level of Stress using Factors of ENSS

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Nurse administrators could plan ways to relieve stress among nurses by focusing on specific sources of stress, such as problems with supervisors, too much work, and not being emotionally ready.
- Workload can be cut down by cutting down on non-nursing tasks, planning the duty schedule well.
- The hospital management needs to hire qualified skilled nurses, and train nurses how to set priorities.
- To prevent nurses from not being emotionally ready, hospital management could give nurses chances to improve their emotional stability and give them ways to improve their communication.
- In-service education program should be conducted often to the nurses. It will help nurses to learn new things and feel better about themselves.
- The hospital management need to arrange refresher courses to the nurses to equip themselves emotionally, technically, mentally and physically good to work in the organization without stress.
- Conflict with administrators can be solved by giving supervisors training and counseling in the field of administration, as well as planning ways to help team members get along better with each other.
- A stress-reduction program that focuses on certain important stressors will help nurses deal with the stress of their jobs.
- Simple stress burnout and cope up strategies need to be followed in the workplace.

CONCLUSION

In general, nurses work in places that can be physically, mentally, and socially stressful, and this is especially true for nurses who work directly with patients. The most important stressors for the nurses are due to physical working environment. This includes overtime, frequent night shifts, unsuitable work/rest schedules, and working under pressure to finish tasks quickly. Also, a lot of their stress comes from their psychological work environment, such as having to deal with death and dying, not being emotionally ready, and not knowing what treatment to give. Concerning the social working environment stressors for these nurses, an analysis of items related to the factor “problems with peers” showed that not being able to share experiences and feelings with peers was a big job stressor, which may be because they didn’t have enough chances to do so. “The problem with patients and their families” is another important social factor. When hospital visits are blocked, nurses become the major connection between patients and their families. This means they are more likely to be abused and given unreasonable

requests, which puts them under a lot of pressure. So, the hospital management needs to take care of the stress of the nurses working in their hospitals to increase the productivity and pleasant working environment to the employees in the healthcare sector.

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