

Review Article

Perceived Stress among Staff Nurses at Work Place: A Preliminary Review

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Abstract

Hospital nurses are exposed to various work related factors that may be associated with increased risk of developing different mental disorders. Empirical evidence on the prevalence and correlates of individual mental health problems such as stress, anxiety and depression is widely reported, while a combined pattern of these conditions is unknown. This study aims to examine the co-occurrence of stress, anxiety and depression among clinical nurses, and to explore socio-demographic characteristics of, and working conditions experienced by, nurses that may be associated with these three mental health conditions.

Keywords: Health care workers; Occupational stress.

Introduction

Stress has been categorized as an antecedent or stimulus, as a consequence or response, and as an interaction. It has been studied from many different frameworks (or perspectives?). For example, Selye proposed a physiological assessment that supports considering the association between stress and illness. Conversely, Lazarus advocated a psychological view in which stress is "a particular relationship between the person and the environment that is appraised by the person

as taxing or exceeding his or her resources and endangering his or her well being."

Stress is not inherently deleterious, however. Each individual's cognitive appraisal, their perceptions and interpretations, gives meaning to events and determines whether events are viewed as threatening or positive. Personality traits also influence the stress equation because what may be overtaxing to one person may be exhilarating to another.

Nevertheless, stress has been regarded as an

occupational hazard since the mid-1950s. In fact, occupational stress has been cited as a significant health problem. Work stress in nursing was first assessed in 1960 when Menzies identified four sources of anxiety among nurses: patient care, decision making, taking responsibility, and change. The nurse's role has long been regarded as stress filled based upon the physical labor, human suffering, work hours, staffing, and interpersonal relationships that are central to the work nurses do. Since the mid-1980s, however, nurses' work stress may be escalating due to the increasing use of technology, continuing rises in health care costs, and turbulence within the work environment.

It was found that job stress brought about hazardous impacts not only on nurses' health but also in their abilities to cope with job demands. This seriously impairs the provision of quality care and the efficacy of health services delivery. Nursing has been identified by a number of studies as a stressful occupation. Stress has a cost for individuals in terms of health, wellbeing, and job satisfaction, as well as for the organization in terms of absenteeism and turnover, which in turn may impact the quality of patient care.

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relationships that are central to the work nurses do. Since the mid-1980s, nurses' work stress has been escalating due to the increasing use of technology, continuing rises in health care costs, and turbulence within the work environment.

Most people can cope with stress for short periods but Chronic stress produces prolonged changes in the physiological state. The issues of job stress, coping, and burnout among nurses are of universal concern to all managers and administrators in the area of health care. All these stresses can be modified in a positive way by the use of appropriate stress management skills.

Conclusion

Stress, anxiety and depression were prevalent among clinical nurses. Heterogeneity in demographic characteristics and working conditions were observed across clusters with different patterns of mental disorders. Institutional effort should be emphasized to support nurses in their career development to reduce psychological strains.

It is important that stress is a state, not an illness, which may be experienced as a result of an exposure to wide range of work demands and in turn can contribute to an equally wide range of outcomes, which may concern the employees' health and be an illness or an injury or changes in his/her behavior and lifestyle.

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