A Study on Job Stress among Nurses in a Selected Medical College Hospital

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Abstract: In the present scenario there are many fields and professions which are expanding day by day. Among the professions some are considered very relaxed and some are stressful. Nursing is a profession which needs lots of personal commitment and time, due to the nature of the profession. Their main task is to take care and provide services to the sick, hence it is important that they should be free from stress. In the present work a cross sectional descriptive study design was adopted for the study to assess the job stress among nurses in the Yenepoya Medical College Hospital, Mangalore. A total of 90 nursing staff were covered as samples from Yenepoya Medical College Hospital selected through purposive sampling technique. Questionnaire method was used to collect the data. The study revealed that the majority, 80% of them have moderate level of stress. The level of stress is significantly associated with age, children and working department. Effective occupational stress management techniques may be imparted to control the job stress and improving coping at work.

Key Words: Occupational Stress, Nurses, Stress Management Techniques, Coping at Work.

Introduction

Stress is an internal state which can be caused by physical demand on the body or by environmental and social situation which is evaluated as potentially harmful, uncontrollable or exceeding our resource for coping. These physical, environmental and social causes are referred to as stressors (Pantula N.K., 1996). World Health Organization has viewed stress as a worldwide epidemic because stress has recently been observed to be associated with 90% of visits to physicians (Akinboye J., 2002). Stress can be self imposed like, setting too high standard or having unrealistic expectations regarding one's abilities; situational like, time constraints, lack of resources, threats to emotional or physical wellbeing, challenges beyond one's ability to respond, conflicts between one's personal values and the values of others (Nancy Shields, 2016).

Occupation is one of the most important sources of stress in people's lives. For each person, occupation is a source of social identity, needs, and an opportunity for social contact; therefore, it is considered as a major source of stress (Leka S., 2012). Based on Cooper's definition, occupational stress is the result of the interaction between the individual and the work environment (A. Clegg, 2001).

Job stress among healthcare staff is becoming a common occurrence in most public health services (Sue Winstanley, 2002). In their jobs, employees are confronted with various kinds of demands, which may become 'stressors' when they tax or exceed the employee's adaptive capabilities. Examples of common job stressors include work overload, role problems, poor job control, and lack of support from supervisors and co-workers, and interpersonal conflicts. These stressors may lead to negative psychological conditions like depression, irritability, burnout; physical conditions like headaches, heart palpitations, hyperventilation and behavioural conditions such as absenteeism, turnover, violence symptoms or 'strains (International Encyclopaedia, 2001).

Nurses are one of the most diverse and largest workforces in the health care system. The nurses are one of the strongest pillars of the health care delivery system in providing safe, affordable and quality services to the people. Mortality, morbidity and disability reduction, health promotion through healthy life styles are positive health outcomes in which nurses have a pivotal role (66th World Health Assembly).

This field is both mentally and physically demanding and nurses are often exposed to health risks from infectious diseases. As such this profession demands long hours of work and duties which incorporate both skill and understanding of patient's needs. Those who come forward to take up this as a career has to be patient, courageous, have a service mentality and at the same time be ready to work for extra hours even night shifts (M. Eswari, 2011).

Stress in the nursing profession is an ongoing worldwide problem. Of all health care professionals, nurses have been found to have especially high levels of stress (Tony Butterworth, 1999; Renee Bourbonnais, 1998). Stress is acknowledged to be one of the main causes of absence from work (Roger Mead, 2000). Anxiety, frustration, anger and feelings of inadequacy, helplessness or powerlessness are emotions often associated with stress

(Smeltzer S., 2008). If these are exhibited by a nurse, then the customary activities of daily living are distorted. A nurse who is angry will find it difficult to give holistic care to patients, this makes her negligent in her duties. Occupational stress in nurses affects their health and increases absenteeism, attrition rate, injury claims, infection rates and errors in treating a patient (Shirey M.R., 2006). Nurses' emotions are contagious, and stress has an impact on the quality of their interactions and relationship with others. The more nurses are able to manage their own stress, the better they would positively affect those around them and the less others stress will negatively affect them. Without much stress, nurses spend quality time together that is constructive. This increases organizational effectiveness especially in the case of team or group work. The issue is not whether nurses go through stress, but how it is managed (Lazarus R.S., 1984).

Need for the Study

Nursing has been identified as an occupation that has high levels of stress (S.H. Zeighami Mohammadi, 2011). For nurses and their organization, job stress is very expensive and its side effects become clear in the form of tiredness, harsh behaviour, anxiety, increase of blood pressure, lack of self-confidence, lack of job satisfaction and decrease in efficiency (Golshiri P., 2012; McGrath, 1989)

Nurses are playing a major role in health care settings. As their duty is to take care of the ill ones, it is important that they should be free from stress. So the current study is important to understand how work associated stress affects nurses, what factors in their working environment causes the greatest stress and also the association between the level of stress with the demographic variables.

Aim of the Study

To assess the job stress among nurses in a selected Medical College Hospital.

Objectives of the Study

- 1. To assess the level of work-related stress among staff nurses.
- 2. To find out various determinants, which have an impact on work stress.
- 3. To know the association between the level of stress with certain demographic variables.

Materials and Methods

The study approval was taken from institutional ethics committee and written consent was obtained from the participants. Cross sectional descriptive research design with non-probability purposive sampling method was adopted as a technique to collect the data. 90 Staff nurses of Yenepoya Medical College Hospital who have completed minimum one year of service were selected as samples in this study. Self-administered questionnaire with standard stress test was used as a tool. The study instrument has two sections.

Part I: Demographic and socio-economic variables: Information related to age, religion, sex, education, marital status, working position, personal income is included in this section.

Part II: Including Professional Life Stress test by David Fontana, The British Psychological Society and Routledge Ltd, Leicester, England, 1989. It consists of 24 questions.

The data collected was computerized and analysed using SPSS software. Chi square test was used as the test for significance. P value less than 0.05 was considered to be statistically significant.

Results

Socio Demographic Information

Table 1: Distribution of Nurses According to Socio-Demographic Profile

Socio-demographic factors	Number (%)
Age (n=90)	
22-25 years	67.80%
26-29 years	25.60%
30-33 years	3.30%
34 years and above	3.30%

Gender (n=90)	
Female	95.60%
Male	4.40%
Religion (n=90)	
Hindu	51.10%
Christian	42.20%
Muslim	6.70%
Marital status (n=90)	
Single	74.40%
Married	25.60%
Children (n=90)	
Having children	6.70%
No children	93.30%
Residence	
Hostel	61%
With family	21%
Rented room	18%

The mean age of the respondents is 25.06 years and the standard deviation is ± 3.106

The age wise distribution shows that 67.80% were in the age ranging from 22-25 years, 25.60% were of 26-29 years. A majority 95.60% of female nurses participated in this study. 51% of them were Hindus, 42.20% Christians and 6.70% of Muslims participated. 74.40% were single and 25.60% were married. 93.30% have no children and only 6.70% have children. 61% were staying in hostel, 21% of stay with family and 18% were in rented rooms.

Job Profile of Nurses

Table 2: Information regarding Job Profile of Nurses

Information on Job	Number (%)
Position (n=90) Supervisor Counter In charge Staff nurses Work experience(n=90) Below 2 years 2-5 Years 6-8 Years Above 8 years	2% 12% 86% 52% 40% 3% 5%
Working department (N=90) Medicine, Psychiatry and Endoscopy OBG and Orthopedics General Surgery Urology and Nephrology Dermatology and Pulmonary Medicine Special and Private ward ENT and Ophthalmology ICU and POR ICU and POR	16.70% 8.90% 12.20% 8.90% 7.80% 7.70% 10% 15.6% 12.20%

A majority 85.6% staff nurses, 12.2% counter in charge and 2.2% supervisors have participated in the study. 52% have below 2 years of working experience, 40% of them have 3-5 years of work experience. 16.7% of them were working in Medicine, Psychiatry, Endoscopy departments, 15.6% were in Post-Operative Recovery and Intensive Care Unit, 12.2% were in Surgery and Oncology, 10% in ENT and Ophthalmology, 8.9% from Urology and Nephrology. Other representations were from dermatology, pulmonary medicine, orthopaedics, OBG and special wards.

80%
80
40
18.9%
20
Low level Moderate High level stress level stress stress

Figure 1: Nurses Level of Stress

Legend:

Score 15 = Stress isn't a problem in life.

Score 16-30 = moderate range of stress for a busy professional person.

Score 31-45 = Stress is clearly a problem

The mean level of stress is 20.60 and the standard deviation is ± 5.398 .

The data reveals that majority that is 80% have moderate level of stress, 18.9% have low level of stress and only 1.1% have high level of stress.

Table 3: Statistical Scores of Comparison of Level of Stress to Demographic Variable

Sl. No	o Demographic variable	Chisquarevalu	e Interpretation	Pvalue
1	Age in Years	4.165	Significant	0.008
2	Marital Status	1.334	Not Significant	1.253
3	Children	0.097	Significant	0.005
4	Residence	4.522	Not significant	0.523
5	Position	2.097	Not Significant	1.938
6	Working Department	18.659	Significant	0.05

The dependent variable that is respondent's level of stress is significantly associated with demographic variables age 0.008, children .005 and working department 0.05. The other demographic variables marital status, residence and position are not significantly associated and the P value is above 0.05.

Discussion

Demographic, Social and Job Profile of Nurses

In the present study 90 nurses have participated and their mean age is 25.06 years and standard deviation is ±3.10, 67.8% of the respondents were in the age ranging from 22-25 years, 25.6% are of 26-29 years. Majority 95.6% females, 51% were Hindus, 42.2% were Christians and the rest 6.7% were Muslims. 79.8% of them were single. 52% have below 2 years of work experience, 40% have 3-5 years of experience represented the study. Similar results found in the study done by Ali Sahraian et. al., 2013 in which 113 (62.8%) women and 67 (37.2%) men participated. 62.8% were single and 37.2% were married. A study carried out by Rani Subha P., Bipin B., 2014; showed that 50 (83.33%) were female, 32 (53.34%) were unmarried. Regarding religion 38 (63.33%) were Hindu and 18 (30.00%) were Christian. Out of 60 samples 33 (55.00%) had one to two years of experience.

Assessing the Stress among the Nurses

The present study reveals that the mean level of stress is 20.60 and the standard deviation is ± 5.398 . Majority 80% have moderate level of stress, 18.9% have low level of stress and 1.1% had high level of stress. Among all the age groups moderate level of stress was found. Level of stress is lower in married nurses. Those who are not married 82.1% of them had moderate level of stress and 73.9% who were married had moderate level of stress. Those who had children shows 83.3% of moderate level of stress and those who were not having children shows 79.8% of moderate level of stress indicates that the nurses who had children face high level of stress. Those who stay in hostel face more stress compare to those who stay in family or in rented room. In comparison with the position of nurses, staff nurses were facing more stress than supervisor and counter in charges. The nurses who work in urology and nephrology wards show less stress compared to the nurses work in other departments.

The dependent variable, level of stress is significantly associated with demographic variables age 0.008, children .005 and working department 0.05. The other demographic variables are not significantly associated and the P value is above 0.05.

Similar results found in the study conducted by Parul Sharma et. al., 2014 on occupational stress among staff nurses the result was moderate stress 51%, 46% low level of stress, severe 3% levels of job-related stress. A study (Tessy Tressa Jose and Sripathy M. Bhat 2013) result shows 60.38% experienced low stress and 38.46% experienced moderate stress and stress was high among 1.15% of the subjects.

Different results are also found in a study done by Ali Sahraian et. al., 2013 shows significantly higher level of occupational stress in most scales of occupational stress, except relationship, compared with nurses working in psychiatric wards. There was no significant correlation among scales of occupational stress and age, marital status, work shifts and experience. However, they found a significant correlation with some scales of occupational stress and sex and education level. A study done by Subha Rani P., Bipin B. 2014 shows that 39 (65.00%) had mild level of stress, 21 (35.00%) had moderate level of stress. The overall level of stress mean score was 48.10 with the standard deviation of 3.28 shows that there was a significant association between age, education, habits and previous exposure to health education with the level of stress among staff nurses working in multispeciality hospitals.

Conclusion

Nursing is known to be a stressful profession. Nursing staff working at the bottom of the hierarchy and in medical college hospitals are the ones who are more stressed out. There is a paucity of data on prevalence of stress amongst nurses in the Indian setting. It has observed in the present study that the mean level of stress is 20.60 and the standard deviation is ± 5.398 . Majority 80% have moderate level of stress, 18.9% have low level of stress and 1.1% having high level of stress. This study has provided an insight into the problem of occupational stress amongst nurses working at Yenepoya Medical College Hospital and deciphered the associated factors responsible for the same. Implementation of welfare policies and creating better work environment may boost the nurses psychologically to feel more secure and to successfully perform their jobs.

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