

Original Research

The Correlates of Stress of Emergency Room Nurses and Quality of Care to Dying Patients

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ABSTRACT

The Emergency Room Nurses significantly provides quick life-saving treatment for patients with injuries or illnesses. This study aimed to determine the significant relationship between the level of stress and quality of care rendered by Emergency Room Nurses to dying patients. The study employed a paper-based, quantitative correlational design with forty-five (45) ER Nurses from a tertiary hospital in Manila as respondents. An expert-validated Researcher-made tool was utilized to measure the level of stress in the following aspects: ethical, psycho-emotional, and personal integrity, along with the quality of care in the aspects of assessment, planning, intervention, and evaluation. Statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, weighted mean, ANOVA, and f-test were applied. Most respondents were females aged 31-40, and mostly were single with 1-3 years length of experience in the Emergency Room. Results revealed ($r= 0.55$) a moderate positive correlation between the level of stress and quality of care which means that stress influences the quality of care given to a dying patient. The researchers recommended an awareness campaign tool in the form of a brochure entitled "Wellness Info Pack: How to be Holistically Well" developed for Emergency Room Nurses, this resource is a potent stress-busting tool. Filled with mindfulness sessions, energizing fitness activities, and self-loving relaxation techniques to empower nurses and strengthen their well-being as they journey through the nursing profession.

Keywords: Emergency Room Nurses, Level of Stress, Quality of Care, Wellness Info Pack

INTRODUCTION

The Emergency Department is a vital healthcare facility that provides life-saving treatment to patients with injuries or illnesses. However, the high-stress environment can negatively impact healthcare professionals, particularly nurses. A study by Latimer et al. (2020) highlights the moral distress experienced by nurses in intensive care units,

coronary care units, and emergency rooms. This distress arises when healthcare providers cannot act ethically due to various constraints or conflicting situations. The high mortality rate and significant treatment needs in the Emergency Room highlight the importance of addressing the emotional and ethical challenges faced by healthcare professionals. By addressing these concerns, healthcare organizations can create an environment that promotes their well-being and facilitates optimal

patient care, including end-of-life care. Cardoso et al. (2022) cited the work of Kostka et al. (2021), emphasizing the natural occurrence of dying as an integral part of life's cycle. Their research emphasizes the importance of understanding and finding solace in the face of loss and the inevitable process of death.

Kostka et al. (2021) highlight the high mortality rate in hospitals, putting daily stress on nurses who must provide care to dying patients. This underscores the need to prioritize end-of-life care, especially in the Emergency Room. The increasing number of dying patients in the Emergency Room makes it more challenging for nurses to handle, as the room is designed to provide immediate treatment and prevent death, making it more stressful for them to manage (Giles, T.M. et al. 2019).

Mojoyinola (2017) emphasizes the importance of stress in nurses' psychological well-being and job performance. In the Emergency Room, nurses face heavy workloads, shift work, long hours, role ambiguity, conflicts, and frequent exposure to patient deaths. These stressors can decrease job performance and hinder effective care delivery. Kostka et al. (2021) highlight the profound psychological impact of patient deaths, leading to self-doubt, guilt, and loss of confidence in professional skills.

Nurses are often faced with ethically challenging situations in the hospital setting, such as the death of a patient. For instance, according to Kim, Y.H. et al. 2021, nurses in the Emergency Department frequently have ethically challenging situations, especially since it involves their patient's death, and are unsure of how they can adequately express their emotions while doing their job. Palmryd, L., et al., 2021 stated that personal integrity is one of the core

values nurses must possess when providing ethical care to their patients.

Personal integrity is a core value nurses must possess for ethical care, but there is a lack of specificity in understanding it among healthcare professionals (Palmryd et al., 2021). This prompted the researchers to determine the Correlation between the Stress of Emergency Room Nurses and the Quality of Care for Dying Patients. An essential motivation for conducting this study is to know how this paper would support the well-being of the nurses, optimize the healthcare systems, and make advanced evidence-based practices in end-of-life care that would prioritize the welfare of the emergency room nurses and their job satisfaction.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A quantitative correlational design was used to identify the patterns and connections between the variables as well as to foresee the statistical relationship between current data and variables. (Curtis, et al., 2016).

Study Site and Subjects

The study was carried out in two selected tertiary hospitals in the city of Manila. One hundred percent of the population of Emergency Room Nurses from the two selected hospitals were asked to participate in the study.

Data Measures

The questionnaire has two parts: the demographic profile of the respondents and determining the level of stress and quality of care rendered by the respondents to dying patients. The first part of the questionnaire included information about sex, age, marital status, and years of working

experience in the emergency room. The second part is divided into two sections. The first section aims to know the level of stress of emergency room nurses in terms of ethical aspect, psycho-emotional aspect, and personal integrity.

The respondents have to choose from 4 - strongly agree, 3 - agree, 2—disagree, 1- strongly disagree to which corresponds to their answer. The second section aims to know the quality of care rendered by emergency room nurses in the emergency room. In this section, there are 4 aspects under the level of care which are based on the nursing process. These are assessment, planning, intervention, and evaluation. The respondent would have to choose from 4 - always, 3 - sometimes, 2 - often, 1 - never to which best corresponds to their answer.

Data Collection Procedure and Ethical Consideration

The study has sought approval from the hospital director of the selected tertiary hospital in Manila and was coordinated with the Head Nurse of the Emergency Room. The facilitation and explanation about the details of the study is conducted. This includes the objectives, benefits, purpose, and possible inconveniences associated with the research process. Before the participants can answer the questionnaire, a signed informed consent from the respondents is secured. The data that is collected is controlled by one person in the group, applying the confidentiality and protection of data. These questionnaires can be answered anytime during the participant's shift. After collecting the papers, the researchers checked if all the papers had been answered. Out of sixteen papers from Hospital A, only ten papers have answers, six papers do not have any answer. Out of twenty nine papers from Hospital

B, only twenty six papers have been filled up with answers, two papers are not returned and one does not have any answer. So the total mortality is nine which is equivalent to 80%.

While carrying out the study, the participants were given informed consent before answering the questionnaire. They were also informed about the risks and had a choice whether to participate in the study or not. There were no foreseeable risks, however, there are a lot of benefits that the participants can derive from the study for the output of the study is a campaign that focuses on the wellbeing of Emergency Room Nurses. The researchers also have given compensation to the participants for answering the questionnaire.

Data Analysis

The data gathered in this study were analyzed using statistical tools such as frequency, weighted mean, anova, and F-test using a statistical tool such as SPSS that applies the frequency and percent of their profile, and weighted mean for categories.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The majority of the respondents are female, aged between 31–40-year-old and single. With their years of experience most of them have 1-3 years of experience in the nursing profession. Regarding Ethical Issues, it got a grand mean of 3.49, verbally interpreted as a very high-stress level. The Psycho-Emotional Issues got a grand mean of 3.39, which is verbally interpreted as a very high level of stress. Personal integrity has a grand mean of 3.33 and is verbally interpreted as a very high-stress level. In the variables of quality of care, most have the interpretation of very good quality of care, this has been evident to Assessment and Evaluation while

Planning and Intervention got an excellent quality of care. There is a significant difference in the level of stress of Emergency Room Nurses in the aspect of Sex. Other demographic variables such as Age, Years of Experience, and Marital Status do not have any significant relationship with the stress level of nurses. With a p-value of 0.001 and is interpreted as High Positive Correlation, the findings show that there is a significant relationship between the level of stress and quality of care rendered to dying patients; because of the increased workload in dealing with dying patients, the job stress can jeopardize the mental and physical well-being of nurses, reduce energy and job performance, and lead to failure to deliver effective nursing care, all of which have an undesirable effect on patient outcomes.

According to the result of this study, the level of stress has a direct relationship with the quality of care. In which, if the level of stress increases, the quality of care given to the patient also increases. The researchers recommend an awareness campaign tool in the form of a brochure, entitled "Wellness Info Pack: How to be Holistically Well" This brochure is a helpful tool for Emergency Room Nurses for it contains questions that start with 'How' and what are the tips to solve it. In this way, they are on track with their life as well as being holistically well. With this brochure, it will help them deal with the stressors so that the quality of care that is given to the patient is also of best quality. It is completely handy so they can bring it everywhere.

CONCLUSIONS

The study aims to determine the relationship between the level of stress and quality of Care rendered by emergency room nurses to dying patients. The majority of the emergency room nurses participants are females. Most of the respondents in

this study are females who are single with the age bracket of 31-40 and with 1-3 years of working experience in the Emergency Room. The level of stress in terms of ethical issues, psycho-emotional issues and personal integrity were all interpreted as very high levels of stress. The quality of care rendered by Emergency Room Nurses to a dying patient is labeled as a very good quality meaning that the service they rendered is of good quality when distributed to assessment, planning, intervention and evaluation. There is a significant difference in the level of stress of emergency room nurses according to their demographic profile specifically with the variable sex. However, there is no proven significant difference in the Nurses when it is grouped according to profile. In knowing if there is a significant relationship between the level of stress and quality of care, the result indicated that there is a positive correlation between the level of stress and quality of care provided by emergency room nurses. To put it in another way, results showed that the lower the level of stress of emergency room nurses, the higher the quality of care given to dying patients. This is supported by a study made by Ardic, et.al (2022), the increasing work stress of nurses affects their motivation and performance negatively.

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