

Title: EFFECTS OF JOB
STRESS ON WORK
BEHAVIOUR AMONGST
NURSES IN SELECTED
PUBLIC AND PRIVATE
HOSPITALS AT PUNE

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Dr.C.N.Rawal, Research Guide

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Profile of Dr.C.N.Rawal

A Commerce/Management Teacher working in the field of Marketing, Human Resource Management and Finance since 1984.

Academic Qualification: M.Com. M.A. (Eco.), M.Phil (Com), D.T.L., L L B., Ph.D.

☞ **Research Experience:** Recognized Research Guide: - Business Administration & Management, Accountancy and Human Resource Management of UOP

- I. Seven Candidates have obtained their Ph. D. - UoP.
- II. Eight candidates have obtained M. Phil Degree

☞ **Research Papers: - 32**

- I. University level: - 02
- II. State level: - 10
- III. National level: - 09
- IV International level 13

☞ **Seminar, Workshop, Conferences Attended: - 109**

☞ *Participation at University:*

- Member of BOS Marketing, University of Pune
- Member- Senate, UOP
- Chairman – BOS , Foreign Trade , UOP
- Member – Faculty of Commerce, UOP
- Member – Academic Council, UOP
- Resource Person SAC, Orientation, Commerce Refresher Courses, UOP
- Member –NSS Advisory Committee University of Pune.
- Member – Staff Academic College Advisory Committee UOP
- Member MCCA – Education Committee
- Member NAAC Peer Team

Membership Board /Committee:

- ❖ Chairman Academic Advisory Board, students welfare Association, Pune
- ❖ Ex-Member, Managing committee The Institute of company secretaries of India, Pune Chapter. During this period Pune chapter received BEST CHAPTER AWARD.
- ❖ Life member: PGK Mandal Pune providing education from KG TO PG
- ❖ Trustee - Students Welfare Association, Pune
- ❖ Life Member – All India Accounting Association
- ❖ Life Member – All India College Principal Association
- ❖

F) Book Publications: 10 Books as co-author

G) Attended VI Ministerial Conferences of WTO held at Hong-Kong

H) Awards: a) Best Teacher Award- Govt. of Maharashtra

Profile of Prof.Shradha Pardeshi: Working as Assistant Professor in **H.V.Desai College**, teaching **Business Mathematics &Statistics including Marketing Management Paper – II.Academic Qualification-M.Com, M.Phil, and SET.Teaching Experience-04 years.**

Effects of Job Stress on Work Behaviour amongst Nurses in Selected Public and Private Hospitals at Pune

ABSTRACT: *Nursing has been reported as a stressful speciality. Nursing staff working at the bottom of the hierarchy in hospitals are the ones who are more stressed out. The current nursing shortage and high turnover is of great concern because of its impact upon the efficiency and effectiveness of any health-care delivery system. Further, recruitment and retention of nurses are persistent problems associated with job stress. The researcher intends to understand the nurses' experiences and perceptions of job-related stress and its effect on their work behaviour. It aimed at addressing the issue of how stress at work can be effectively managed, reduced, or prevented by the government and hospital management boards in order to enhance the health of their nurses, as well as improving their work behaviour.*

METHODS: *This paper presents the result of a pilot study in selected couple of public and private hospitals at Pune. Data was collected using pre-tested and self-administered questionnaire with nurses including primary care professionals. An extensive literature search was also performed aiming to identify and review research studies that investigate variables which influence job stress and work behaviour of nurses working in health settings.*

RESULTS: *The study established a fact that job stress has significant negative effect on work behaviour of the nurses.*

CONCLUSION: *It is essential to reorganize work environment and remove as many as possible stressors, along with training of staff in ways with which they can manage job stress and achieve better adjustment in order to promote employees' health and safety.*

Keyword *Job stress, turnover, job satisfaction, role conflict.*

INTRODUCTION:

The essential of the profession is such that a woman can naturally part into it. A woman is loving mother by nature, kind, patient and sympathetic. These instinctive qualities and skills of a woman are fully utilized in the nursing profession. Nursing is a noble profession. A nurse who serves the patients conscientiously helps them get rid of pains and strains and several times pulls them back to life from the clichés of death is not less than angel for the patient. Nursing service is one of the most important components of hospital services. Nurses forms the largest single technical group of personnel engaged in patient care in hospitals next only to doctors, consuming approximately one-third of hospital cost. However, since last few years it is a growing debate that there is a huge amount of shortage of nurses in hospitals. Thus, survey on effect of job stress on work behaviour is one way to collect detail information on various job related factors influencing job performance and job satisfaction. This survey is desire to get the nurses and to know what they really think about the selected hospitals hence; this particular subject has been chosen.

Though nursing is a rewarding and satisfying profession, it is observed that job 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.ⁱ Job stress is recognised worldwide as a major challenge to worker's health and the healthiness of their organisations. It has become a more recognised term over the past decade and therefore is a major cause for concern for many nurses at work.ⁱⁱ The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines job stress as "the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them". Nurses due to the nature of their job are always exposed to high levels of stress. In a recent review of the empirical human factors and ergonomic literature specific to nursing performance, nurses were found to work in generally poor environmental

conditions. Working in an enclosed atmosphere, constantly dealing with death and the dying, uncertainty concerning treatment plans, excessive workload, poor staff support are the prominent factors contributing to the nurse's job stress which lead to physical and psychological problems.ⁱⁱⁱ A 1998-1999 survey of more than 43,000 nurses in five countries found that 17 per cent to 39 per cent respondents planned to leave their job because of their job demands creating a huge shortage of nursing personnel.^{iv}

Nurses, in India, are overburdened as the nurse to patient ratio is low. They are overloaded by the number of patients they oversee and the number of tasks they perform. They work under cognitive overload, engaging in multitasking and encountering frequent interruptions. When a nursing shortage occurs, the workload increases for those who remain on the job.^v They are responsible –along with other health professionals–for the treatment, safety, and recovery of acutely or chronically-ill, injured, health maintenance, treatment of life threatening emergencies and medical and nursing research.^{vi} Nurses don't only assume the role of care givers but also administrators and supervisors of patients'. In addition to the higher patient acuity, work system factors and expectations also contribute to the nurses' workload: nurses are expected to perform non-professional tasks such as delivering and retrieving food trays; housekeeping duties; transporting patients; and ordering, coordinating, or performing ancillary services. These multiple work roles contribute to significant amount of job related stress amongst nursing staff particularly those working at the bottom of the hierarchy such as staff nurses and nursing sisters, who end up sharing most of the work burden.^{vii} Shift duties, time pressures, and lack of respect from patients, doctors as well as hospital administrators, inadequate staffing levels, interpersonal relationships, death and a low pay scale significantly add to their stress levels.

Thus, Job stress in the nursing profession has been associated with decreased job satisfaction increased psychological and physical complaints and absenteeism.^{viii} There are several important consequences of high nursing overload.^{ix} Research shows that a heavy nursing overload adversely affects patient safety increases burnout and furthermore, it negatively affects nursing job satisfaction and, as a result, contributes to high turnover and the nursing shortage. This study analyses in detail about the stress caused by the workplace, among the nurses and its impact on their work behaviour in selected Public and Private Hospitals in Pune City.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

In view of the above debate and criticism, the questions are arising with the specific aim of addressing the problem as stated below.

- ❖ What factors influence on work behaviour of the Nurses?
- ❖ Whether Nursing stress is viewed as a direct cause of job dissatisfaction and as an indirect cause of absenteeism among the nursing staff?
- ❖ What factors responsible for low attrition level of nurses?
- ❖ Whether there is a need for Indian Health Care System to realise the importance of nurses which they has not yet?

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

- ❖ The aim of the present study was to find out common workplace stressors of nursing profession and examine the effects of same on work behaviour among nurses working in public and private hospitals.
- ❖ It aimed at addressing the issue of how stress at work can be effectively managed, reduced, or prevented by the government and hospital management boards in order to enhance the health of their nurses, as well as improving their work behaviour.

NEED OF THE STUDY:

The topic of the research work is an area of concern for all the hospitals. Hospitals need to be different in themselves by adding service, job security and long term relationship with their nurses, so the nurses at large could select their hospitals according to their qualification and experience and the hospitals also need to identify qualified and well experienced nurses. The study is important to find out improvement of the hospital facilities, the hospital needs, to find out what to provide, when to provide and how to be a service provider.

The study is useful to the organisation and the investigator in the following ways:

1. It helps in identifying those factors which cause stress, attrition and to work upon them.
2. It helps to identify the factors which contribute to nurse's retention and to improve those.
3. It is useful to assess the strategies being adopted by the hospital to retain nurse and to make changes in it if required.
4. It helps to identify the major challenges in retaining nurses and converting few into opportunities.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

- ❖ The study is limited to selected government and private hospitals of Pune City.
- ❖ The sample size is based on pilot study hence it may not give the exact picture.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY:

Nursing is becoming a mobile profession. Nurses, form the backbone of healthcare delivery system. How to attract and retain hospital registered nurses have become a recurring theme discussed by hospital boards, administrators and physicians. The worsening hospital nurse shortage and recent legislation mending minimum hospital patient-to-nurse ratios demand an understanding of how nurse staffing levels affect patient outcomes and nurse retention in hospital practice. Hence, this study seeks to provide an in-depth analysis on this situation and seeks to identify factors contributing to nurse's attrition, to analyse the factors for reducing attrition and to provide suggestions to reduce it. This study adds to the growing body of evidence regarding the link between quality work environments, improved patient outcomes and nurse job satisfaction. The results of this study can be used to further advocate for policies that will enable both the implementation of work environment improvement strategies but also the resources that will be required to sustain them such as adequate staffing.

METHODS:

Research Design (Type of Research)-This research study is a 'Descriptive' and 'Analytical'.

Nature of the Study-This research is Quantitative study in nature.

Research plan for data collection-This research study is based on Primary and Secondary data.

A] Primary Source [Primary data collection]:-Survey and Interview Method-In this research study, the information has been collected through the 'survey method' and 'interview method'. The respondents (Nurses, Nurse in charge) were directly interviewed by the researcher in the hospital premises with the help of a structured questionnaire. In order to study the nurse job stress the questions addressed were related to their job factors, nature of work, hours of work, decision making and job content.

B] Secondary Source [Secondary data Collection]:-Another important side of this research study is a secondary data, which is collected through the following sources-

Books

Journals

Published reports and articles

Weekly Magazines and

Related websites

Setting and Sampling: A cross sectional pilot study was carried out on 104 randomly selected nurses working from five units/ wards in which their tasks were highly demanding. (Paediatrics, accident and emergency, surgical, outpatients and orthopaedic wards / units) in selected public and private hospital. They were asked to assess the various components of stress they experienced at work in last six months. They were also asked to assess the effect of such stress on their work behaviour. The nursing in charge were also selected from the same five units and wards.

Study tool and technique: The Job Stress Questionnaire was pretested and developed using a validated tool and selected nursing personnel were interviewed. Discussions were carried out in each institution for in-depth analysis and study of their views and opinions regarding the job stress and family environment and its impact on their work behaviour. The total collected data was assimilated and analysed with the help of percentage to bring the results.

RESULTS:

Socio-demographic information: The sociodemographic characteristics of the nursing personnel showed that majority of them are in the age group of 30-45yrs (48.7%), followed by more than 45 yrs. (32.5%). 74.4% of nurses are currently married whereas only 1.7% are divorced. Out of 25 (21.4%) unmarried, 18 (72% of unmarried) belonged to age group <30 yrs. Out of the total 104 nurses who participated in the study, 57 nurses were working in Private hospitals and 47 in Government hospitals. Out of total 87 nurses, 44 (37.6%) were from general-ward followed by ICCU & ITU (31.5%), OPD (16.2%), and Operation Theatre (14.5%). Majority (65%) of respondents of this study belonged to nuclear family. The study also showed that 65% or the majority of nurses belonged to nuclear families whereas only (35%) belonged to joint families. Majority of private sector nurses are poorly paid. Majority (50.4%) earn less than Rs.5000. Only 18% of nurses' were paid Rs. >10000/- month.

Prevalence of stress: An overwhelming majority of nurses (87.4%) found their jobs stressful with 32.6% (34/104) reporting severe or extreme stress. Similarly, in relation to stress in their daily life, 87.4% reported some stress while 24.04% (25/104) reported severe/extreme stress. However, there was not much difference in stress levels depending upon the type of hospital. There was no significant difference in the distribution of job stress amongst married nurses (88.6%) and unmarried nurses (82.4%)

Personal and family life: Regarding personal life of nursing personnel it was found that 55.4% of ever married nurses had scope of recreation whereas corresponding figure among unmarried was 80%, and this difference is statistically significant. This study also revealed that 76% of the unmarried nurses have the right to spend money as they wish, whereas only 51.1 % married nurses enjoy that right ($p < 0.05$). Majority of Unmarried nurses (68%) did not have mandatory responsibilities for household work while only 7.6% of married nurses enjoyed that advantage. 63.1% of married nursing personnel managed household responsibility either of her own or partially assisted, whereas corresponding figure for unmarried was only 12%. 25% of married nurses did not receive any kind of co-operation from their family members while only 4% of unmarried received same kind treatment from their family members.

Home stress contributes significantly to the stress faced by nurses. Over-all 18.8% of nursing personnel and 22.8% of ever married nurses opined that for them home stresses were more than work place stresses whereas over-all 41% of nurses thought that work place stress disturbed their home of family life. Detailed conversation with them highlights the following as reasons: prolonged shifts and duty hours (29%), inability to perform household tasks well (25%), inability of taking good care of children and carrying out other responsibilities (18%) and financial matters (10%). Majority of nurses look after the home, cooking, cleaning, etc as they cannot afford much domestic help.

Health and Emotional status of nurses: The physical health status of nurses and emotional symptoms suffered by nurses respectively. Problems of being overweight (34.2% among >45 yrs.' age group), having musculoskeletal problems including backache (over-all 44.4%), and suffering from

gastrointestinal disorders including GERD (50.4%), insomnia (23.9%), chronic headache (21.3%), palpitation (35%) and hypertension (23.9%) are common health problems reported in this study. Emotional symptoms like lack of enthusiasm (49.6%), anxiety (43.6%), irritability (37.6%), sadness (30.7%) and tendency to avoid people (38.5%) were common among nurses in this study.

Work place stressors: Common work stressors as felt by selected respondents and stress level among them includes: Maximum (43.6%) nurses are having moderate stress towards conflict with higher authority and work overload, followed by shifting duty (41.9%), verbal harassments from higher authority (40.1%) and being blamed for everything that goes wrong.

Substantial portion of respondents were moderately stressed due to poor salary (38.5%), conflict with co-workers (36.7%) and lack of security of work (33.3%). 17.9% and 15.4% of respondents were severely stressed due to over- work and poor salary respectively. Majority of respondents did not experienced discrimination due to race or ethnicity (78.6%) and conflict with sub-staffs (59.8%). Maximum respondents were mildly stressed due to harassment by patient party (41.9%) and watching patient to suffer (35.9%).

Over all, understaffed department and over-work, poor salary, no appreciation for good work, conflict with higher authority, fear of making mistake and lack of security of work were identified as major factors for job stress among nurses working at public and private hospitals. Group discussion also revealed that 60.7% of nurses were not getting job satisfaction and 52.1% of them wanted to quit job if better alternative was available.

DISCUSSIONS:

Nurses are the major workforce in the health care industry and they are described as the heart of the hospital, angels and so on. However, according to the study findings a very large percentage (87.4%) of nurses reported job stress. No statistically significant difference was found between stress levels of nurses between the public and private hospitals. Although it did not reach statistical significance, married nurses showed a trend towards being more stressed than those who were unmarried. This could suggest that the additional responsibility of married life may adversely increase the stress levels. Increasing age and longer duration of the job did not have a statistically significant relationship with job stress. It is also found that the nurse-patient ratios are not maintained as per the prescribed norms. And their timing of work varies between 7 to 12 hours per day as per the respective hospital policy. When the working hours are extended beyond the prescribed timing, the nurses do overtime for which they are either paid overtime allowance very lately or never paid for it. The salary paid in the private hospitals is not in par with the Government. The staff cadre is not maintained. In some of the hospitals the nurses while changing their shift; they do morning duty and have to come for night duty the same day without any off in between. Frequent shifting of nurses from departments also takes place eg. today medical ward, tomorrow gynec. Ward etc. Nurses are not provided medical benefits, leave, PF and other benefits in some of the private hospitals. Changing rooms, dining rooms and rest rooms are not specifically allotted for the nurses. In some of the hospitals even the nurse administrators are not provided with separate room. They share the rooms with others or use the ones that is been used by patients. Stressors in everyday life such as worry about children & their studies not being properly supervised, home life getting disturbed due to nature of the job, dependent relatives and inability to attend to the household activities properly further add on to their occupational stress. Because they perceived that worry about all these issues compromised their efficiency at their workplace. The study also highlights the perceived inability of the nurses to efficiently handle other stressful events in their lives when they themselves are in stress. The management and medical professionals dominate the nurses of all cadres. The consequence of these practices makes the nurse to lose interest in discharge of routine work. The nurse does and completes the work in a mechanical way and feels everything is incomplete and lacks job satisfaction. Job Stress have a significant impact on individual nurses and their ability to accomplish tasks and more specifically, poor decision making, lack of concentration, apathy, decreased motivation and anxiety may impair job performance creating uncharacteristic errors. A strong negative relation between nurses' occupational stress and job satisfaction has been found, based on which growing occupational stress results in increased turnover rate, which causes more and more nurses to leave the nursing profession.

CONCLUSIONS:

Stress affecting nurses across the globe has been convincingly documented in the literature. Apart from work place stress nurses also suffer from stress due to work-home interface i.e. competing demands on time and expectations of work place and home. Job Stress occurs when the capacity to deal with a problem is inadequate. Though a certain amount of stress is required to live and enjoy life, however, unremitting stress beyond the individual's coping capacity causes serious threat to the individual's physical and psychological well-being. Understaffed department and over-work, poor salary, no appreciation for good work, conflict with higher authority, fear of making mistake and lack of security of work were identified as major factors for job stress.^x Therefore, it is important to understand how work-associated stress affects nurses, and what factors in their working environment cause the greatest burden. It is also of great importance to gain more knowledge about nurses' working conditions, occupational stress and job satisfaction-knowledge that might be used to decrease their job stress and increase their job satisfaction. Excessive job stress and lack of job satisfaction coupled with family stress ultimately leads to poor patient care services as nursing is one of the most vital part of any hospital services. Every organization should assess the magnitude of stress and analyse it to recognize the need for action. This is called a "stress audit." Hospital managements should address those issues for better quality of care and patient satisfaction. Hospital authorities should take initiative to reduce stress among nurses through regular counselling, health check-up, imparting in service training and introducing career development schemes, organizing workshops to impart awareness about dealing stresses and relaxation techniques etc.

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