A STUDY TO ASSESS THE LEVEL OF STRESS AMONG STAFF NURSES DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract

Stress is the arousal of the mind and body in response to demands made upon them. During the Covid-19 pandemic, healthcare workers faced different stressors of varying degrees, with work-related stress being one. This leads to the workers facing health and/or emotional issues. Determining the extent of stress-related health problems at work is not an easy task. The statement of the study is to assess the level of stress among staff nurses during Covid-19 pandemic at selected hospitals in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. The objective of the study is to assess the level of stress among staff nurses, to associate the level of stress among staff nurses with demographic variables, to create awareness of the effect of stress and coping strategies among staff nurses. A quantitative approach was adopted for the study. The research design used in this study is descriptive design. The study was conducted in selected hospitalsin Chennai. The samplesize of the study was 60, selected by using the probability random sampling technique. A semi-structured interview schedule was used to assess the level of stress among staff nurses. A semi-structured questionnaire was administered to staff nurses who were posted in the Covid-19 ward. Staff nurses were taught about the effect of stress and coping strategies.The result showed that 50% of the sample had moderate stress, 35% of the samples had severe stress and 15% had mild stress.

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1. Introduction

Stress is a state of reaction to a person's impairment of biological and psychological balance. As an inevitable consequence of life, all living creatures experience stress. Stress is a state of change that occurs automatically as a result of physical, mental, and emotional stresses that causes positive and negative emotions and has physical and mental effects.

Nursing is described as a stressful profession and nurses are exposed to a great number of stressors in their working environment. In early 2020, after a December 2019 outbreak in China, World Health Organization identified SARS-CoV-2 as a new type of coronavirus. The outbreak quickly spread around the world. Covid-19 is a disease caused by SARS-CoV-2 that can trigger what doctors call a respiratory tract infection. It affectsthe upper respiratory tract (sinuses, nose, and throat) or lower respiratory tract (windpipe and lungs). It spreads the same way other coronaviruses do, mainly through person-to-person contact. The severity of the infection ranges from mild to fatal.

As the Covid-19 pandemic accelerated, the healthcare systems worldwide have been facing tremendous impact as the pressure on the healthcare system was rising. Exploring and identifying the issues that are faced by the nurses during these testing times will help to support them and strengthen protocols, improve their preparedness, and comfort them. An integrative review of the physical and psychological impact will explore the issues faced by nurses during a response to the Covid-19 crisis.

COVID-19 is a life-threatening disease all over the world and has become an international concern and a global emergency. Following the spread of the infection to more than 150 countries and its reaching pandemic proportions, healthcare personnel, especially nurses, have been on the frontline of providing care to the infected. The nature of healthcare professions, nursing, in particular, involves working in highly stressful conditions. The results of several studies show that prolonged exposure to stress can cause nurses and other healthcare personnel to suffer such consequences as a reduction in their physical and psychological health, lower job satisfaction, reduced efficiency and quality of care, and an increase in the rate of job burnout.

2. Materials & Methods

Research methodology deals with the description of the method and different steps in the collection and organization of data from the investigation. It includes a description of the research approach, research design, setting, population, samplesand sample size,the sampling technique, sampling criteria, development and description of the tool, data collection procedure, and the plan or analysis of the study. A quantitative approach was adopted for the study. The research design used in this study is descriptive design. The study was conducted in selected hospitals in Chennai. The sample size for the study was 60, selected by using the probability random sampling technique. A semi-structured interview schedule was used to assess the level of stress among staff nurses. A semi-structured questionnaire was administered to staff nurses who were posted in the Covid-19 ward. Staff nurses were taught about the effect of stress and coping strategies. The result showed that 50% of the sample had moderate stress, 35% of the samples had severe stress and 15 % had mild stress.

Study Findings

- The Maximum number of nurses were in the age group of 21-30 years: 23 (38%).
- Majority of nurses werefemales:37 (61%).
- Number of married and unmarried nurses was equally distributed at 21 (35%).
- On thesocio-economicfront, the majority of the nurses earned in the range of Rs 20,001 – Rs 30,000 per month:20 (33%).
- On the years of experience,majority of the nurses had 4-6 years of experience: 21 (35%).
- The study shows that 50% of the samples had moderate stress, 35% of the sample had severe stress and 15% had mild stress during the Covid-19 pandemic.

3. Discussion

This study helped to assess the level of stress among staff nurses who were working during the Covid-19 pandemic. Analysis of the collected data showed that nurses' experiences could be classified into four categories such as sleeping patterns, lack of medicine and personal protective equipment, and unable to spend time with family members. One of the findings of the present study was that the nurses were affected by their sleeping patterns which resulted in them not being able to concentrate on their daily activities. They faced a lot of challenges such as not taking food on time, having fear of contracting the infection and transmitting it to their family members, and stress due to caring for the infected patient and their workload which leads to putting the nurse's emotional and physical tiredness.

4. Conclusion

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We conducted research on "A study to assess the level of stress among staff nurses during Covid-19 pandemic at selected hospitals in Chennai, Tamil Nadu" India. The samplesize of the study was 60 which was selected by using the probability random sampling technique.The result showed that 50% of the sample had moderate stress, 35 % of the samples had severe stress and 15% had mild stress.

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NIL.

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