

BURNOUT AMONG NURSES: ROLE OF WORK ENVIRONMENT

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ABSTRACT

The effects of burnout are grave, with consequences not only for the individual personally and professionally but also for patient satisfaction and healthcare systems. Among the most significant implications is the nursing shortage resulting from such scenarios and a subsequent decrease in the quality of patient care. This paper covers the causes, effects and remedies of the job burnout in the nursing sector. Study shows the burnout syndrome being suffered by nurses due to certain work environment deficiencies. Understanding of the most common risk factors for burnout can help organizations and employees modify their personal and professional machinery and lifestyles more efficiently. Suggestions are given for ways organizations and nursing leadership can create a healthy work environment in which priority is given to nurses' psychological well-being and to nurturing cordial relationships. While these strategies are aimed at creating a cordial work environment for nurses, they also ultimately promote better care and satisfaction of patients.

KEYWORDS: Burnout among Nurses, Role of Work Environment

INTRODUCTION

If the work environment is not encouraging of the employees' efforts and expectations, the actuality of the job and the individual's expectations begin to deviate and frustration and discontentment arise. Such scenarios can lead to job displeasure, resulting in poor productivity, and diminished quality, loss of self-confidence and enthusiasm, and performance changes. If such nasty situation is not addressed, anxiety and frustration accumulates and enhances the job stress leading to inefficiencies and malfunctioning. Such syndromes degrade the mental and physical health and wellbeing of the employees creating the vicious circle in the organization. If these symptoms are not addressed, they will progress over higher stages as: irritation and apathy, feelings of despair and depression accompanied with deterioration in quality of service rendered.

Healthcare professionals certainly fall into the category of human services professionals and so are more prone to burnout. In addition to the emotional strain of dealing with pain, sufferings and distress of the patients accompanied by complexities and sensitivity of the job creates stress like situation in this profession. Burnout has been experienced in health staff and all types of healthcare professionals globally, including allied healthcare professionals, medical students and residents, nurses, surgeons and dentists because of various factors. The rates of burnout vary among these subgroups, but in general, the rates are higher among healthcare professionals than among other sectors and occupations. In addition, the most recent research suggests that rates of severe burnout among healthcare professionals are at the peak due to the demanding nature and complexities of the job. Burnout has been observed most comprehensively in physicians and nurses. Nurses experience higher job burnouts than other health staff due to the demanding nature of the job by working at par with the physicians and surgeons and being in the most constant and close touch with the patients and families.

Among nurses, burnout is directly linked to work-related stress, facing pain and sufferings, stretched work hours and workloads and job displeasure. A systematic review demonstrated that work-related stress is significantly related to job satisfaction, with higher stress levels associated with less job satisfaction. In addition, low job satisfaction is associated with burnout. Given these facts, an understanding of the prevalence and causes of job dissatisfaction among nurses can help to define the sources of stress and burnout. Studies have indicated that among nurses, factors of work environment like high workload, stretched work hours, poor communication, lack of supervisory support and workplace bullying are significant for the job dissatisfaction.

For nurses, these stages affect not only them physically but also drain them mentally resulting in loss of work quality and performance, thereby resulting in poor quality of patient care and medical negligence's

Definition of Job Burnout

Burnout is a prolonged response to chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job, and is defined by the three dimensions of exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy. The past 25 years of research has established the complexity of the construct, and places the individual stress experience within a larger organizational context of people's relation to their work. Recently, the work on burnout has expanded internationally and has led to new conceptual models. The focus on engagement, the positive antithesis of burnout, promises to yield new perspectives on the interventions to alleviate burnout. The social focus of burnout, the solid research basis concerning the syndrome, and its specific ties to the work domain make a distinct and valuable contribution to people's health and well-being[1]. Hence, Performance is eventually diminished as an outcome of the burnout cycle, defined below:

- Fatigue
- Distrust
- Reduced Personal achievement & Performance

Causes of Stress and Burnout

The most common causes of burnout is work overload, and others include:

- Inadequate staffing.
- Stretched work hours.
- High workloads.
- High and unclear job expectations.
- Job demands.
- Job complexity.
- Lack of professional recognition, respect, or reward.
- Poor autonomy.
- Ineffective managerial and interpersonal communication.
- Role conflict, insufficiency, and/or ambiguity.

- Poor interpersonal relationships.
- Ineffective managers, supervisors, and/or leaders.
- Poor grievance handling machinery.
- Workplace bullying and harassment.
- Poor physical work environment.
- Facing pain and sufferings in the health sector
- Poor social support
- Work-life disparity

The Nursing Shortage/Burnout Cycle



Figure 1

The relationship between burnout and the nursing shortage is cyclical: job dissatisfaction breeds the syndrome of job burnout, which in turn leads to nursing turnover and subsequent nursing shortage, and the insufficient staffing further increases job dissatisfaction. [2]

III Effects of Job Burnout on Job Performance

- Increase in the employee absenteeism rate
- Higher employee attrition

- High staff negligence and wastages in the organization
- Increase in complaints and grievances in the organization
- Dissatisfied patients and their families
- Increase in staff recruitment and training expenditures
- Increase in legal suites and claims on the organization
- Poor goodwill and reputation of the organization concerned
- Unpleasant work environment
- Increase in stress
- Higher rate of physical and mental disorders in the employees
- Poor productivity and performance
- Poor profitability

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To examine the causes of job burnout among the nurses in the health care sector
- To examine the ill effects of job burnout on the work quality of the nurses
- To suggest the strategies to overcome the job burnout for enhanced performance.

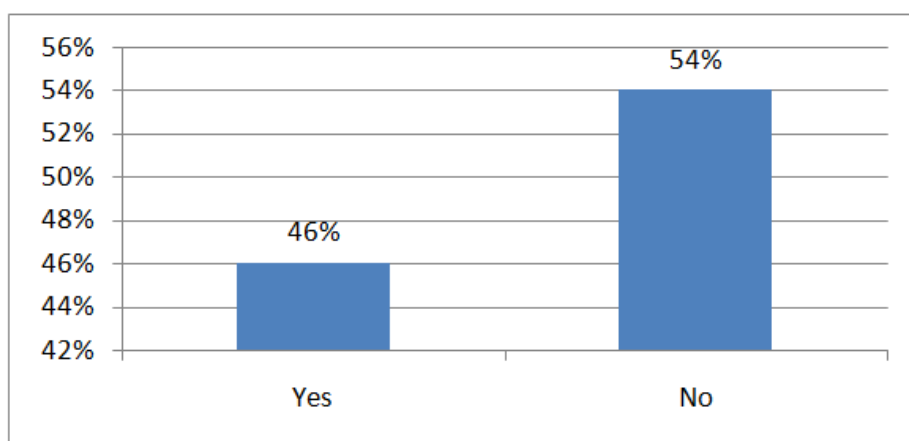
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To collect the data on the aforesaid area, data was collected from 50 nurses of 2 private sector hospitals in the Jaipur city namely Marudhar Hospital and Global Heart Hospital through the structured questionnaire.

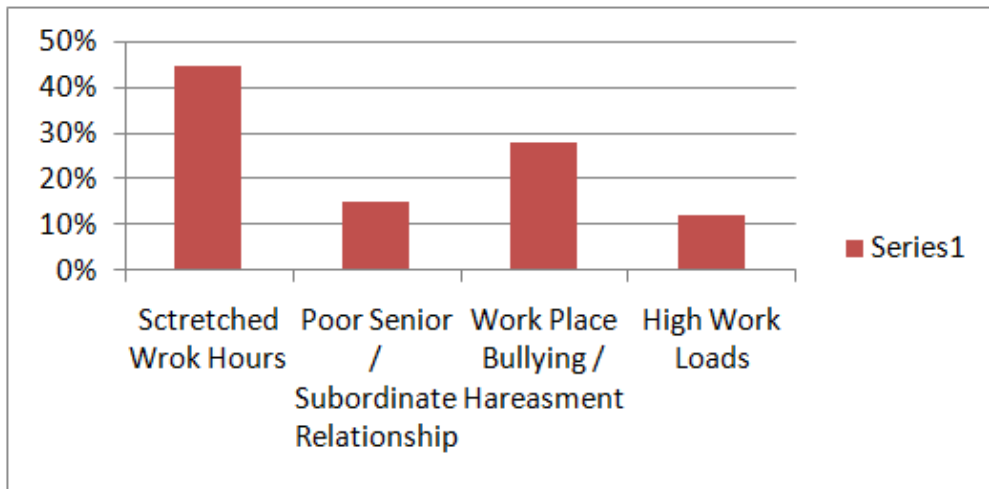
Framework of Analysis and Interpretation through Bar Chart

Data was analysed using MS-EXCEL through the bar graphs.

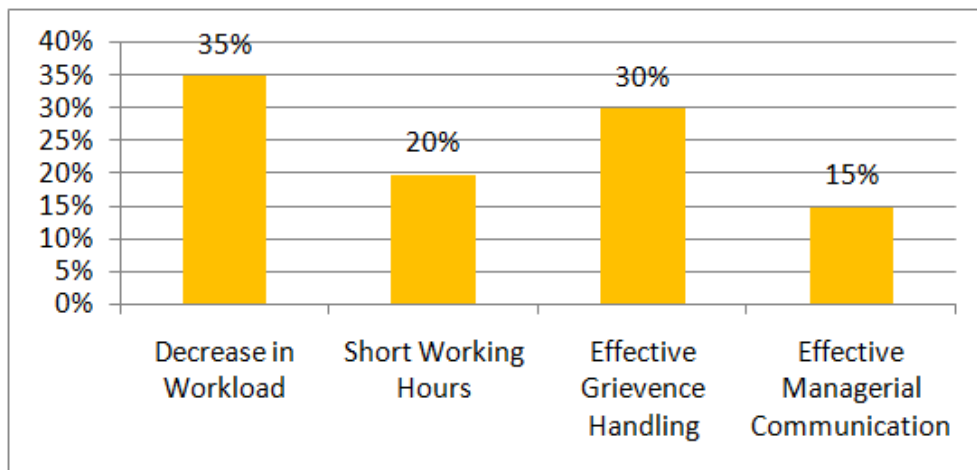
Q1: Are you satisfied with the work environment of your organization?



Q2: What are the major predictors of job dissatisfaction in your organization?



Q3: Which of the following strategy you would recommend to prevent and cope with job burnout in your organization?



FINDINGS

Findings from the study clearly states that job burnout syndrome is highly felt by the nurses working in the hospitals. The major cause that came in the limelight through this study is stretched working hours at the highest accompanied by workplace bullying and high workloads. Poor senior –subordinate relationship is also observed to be one of the reasons for the same.

Among the various coping strategies suggested by the staff to overcome this menace recommends the reduction in the workload, short working hours that can result in work life balance accompanied by effective communication and rapid grievance handling mechanism. Such techniques when applied ethically in true concern can result in higher work pleasures and increased patient care and safety.

HOW TO OVERCOME BURNOUT SYNDROME?

Organization need to play a lead role in removal of this devastating syndrome .The following steps taken by the

administration can create positive impacts as:

- Be fair and unbiased towards the employees
- Provide proper interpersonal communication
- Effective grievance handling
- Adjustable work hours and work loads
- Work life balance
- Cordial interpersonal relationships
- Pleasant work environment
- Adequate staffing
- Counselling the employees
- Providing recreation facilities to the employees
- Providing recognition and praise for good work done

CONCLUSIONS

Job Burnout is the concept that has sustained the concern of nurses and researchers for several decades. These concepts are highly relevant to the entire workforce globally in general and nursing in particular. Improvements in nurses' work environments in hospitals have the prospective to simultaneously reduce nurses' high levels of job burnout and risk of attrition, fatigue and increase patients' satisfaction and care.

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