Impact of Human Resource Management Practices on Occupational Stress of the Doctors and Nurses in the Private Hospitals in Nagapattinam District of Tamil Nadu

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ABSTRACT

Stress is a psychological and physical response to the pressures and challenges of our environment. In hospital settings, job stress among employees, especially in the nursing profession, has been recognized as a significant issue that can have detrimental effects on their physical and psychological well-being. To address this problem, stress management programs are crucial in reducing stress and promoting job effectiveness in the hospital sector. This paper provides an overview of the characteristics of job stress experienced by medical professionals, particularly doctors and nurses, and highlights the effectiveness of stress management techniques. The paper discusses the different types of occupational stress experienced by nurses in selected hospitals, identifies the causes of occupational stress among nurses, and examines how stress affects the mental and physical well-being of nurses. The study concludes that stress management techniques play a vital role in improving the performance of doctors and nurses and increasing opportunities for promotion among nurses. By implementing stress management programs, hospitals can create a healthier and more supportive work environment for their employees, leading to better job satisfaction and overall well-being. Overall, addressing job stress in the medical profession is essential for the health and productivity of healthcare professionals. Stress management programs can significantly contribute to enhancing the quality of patient care and the overall functioning of the hospital sector.

Keywords:

Physical, Psychological, Environment, Employees, Hospital

Introduction

Occupational stress is a feeling of strain or pressure that arises from changes in environmental demands. According to Hans Selye, stress is a non-specific response of the body to any demand for change. Howard further defines stress as a condition where there is a significant gap between the demands placed on a worker and their capacity or perceived capacity to respond. Various circumstances or events that disrupt people's daily functioning and require adjustment may act as causes of stress. In modern life, heavy demands and the need to meet targets with little room for errors can lead to enormous stress and anxiety. Selye categorized stressors as either physical (infection, injury, pain) or psychological (fear, anger, sadness). He introduced the concept of the general adaptation syndrome (GAS), where the body seeks to maintain homeostasis or balance. The contemporary definition of stress is the psychological and physical state that occurs when an individual's resources are insufficient to cope with the demands and pressures of a situation. Not all situations have the same potential for causing stress, and some individuals may experience stress to a greater extent than others. In summary, occupational stress is a result of environmental demands that surpass an individual's coping abilities, leading to a psychological and physical state of strain and pressure. Understanding and managing stress in the workplace are crucial for maintaining employee well-being and productivity.

Literature Review

Tripathi, Niharika & Shukla, (2019), Occupational stress and its management among nurses in hospitals in Gorakhpur introduced that Organizational stress is a critical concern for employers because it can have detrimental effects on employees'

productivity, morale, performance, and overall health. When there is a discrepancy between job requirements and employees' capabilities, resources, and needs, it can lead to mental, emotional, and physical responses. Job stress has become an important issue in understanding human behavior and its impact on occupational performance. Various studies have demonstrated the physiological and psychological responses that occur when individuals are confronted with stress. It is crucial for employers to address and manage organizational stress to ensure the well-being and optimal performance of their employees. Implementing stress management programs and creating a supportive work environment can help reduce the negative impact of stress on employees' health and job performance.

G. Velmurugan et al (2017), the smooth functioning of work in each unit within a healthcare organization is crucial for providing quality service by nurses. To achieve this, the concerned management should take several measures: Adequate Staffing: The management should ensure that each unit has sufficient staff members to handle the workload effectively. Understaffing can lead to increased stress and burnout among nurses, impacting their ability to provide optimal care. Periodical Meetings: Regular meetings between physicians and nurses, as well as between nurses and supervisors, should be arranged to discuss various issues related to patient care, work processes, and any challenges they may be facing. These meetings can foster open communication and collaboration, leading to better work outcomes. Counselling Support: Employing counsellors to interact with nurses who may need emotional support or guidance is essential. Nursing can be a highly demanding and stressful profession, and having access to counselling services can help nurses cope with their challenges and improve their well-being. Administrative Officer: Appointing an administrative officer to oversee these activities can ensure that all the necessary support and interventions are provided to the nursing staff. This officer can act as a liaison between the management and the nurses, addressing any concerns and implementing necessary changes.

Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the dimensions influencing the occupational stress among nurses in a private hospital at Nagappattinam.
2. To determine the occupational stress management strategies used by nurses.

Research Methodology

Secondary Data: The data for study will be collected from various sources like books, journals, magazines, internet sources, etc. In this study we collected through journals, magazines, sites etc

IDENTIFY THE DIMENSIONS INFLUENCING THE OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG NURSES IN A PRIVATE HOSPITAL AT NAGAPPATTINAM

1. **Workload:** The amount of work assigned to nurses, including patient load, overtime, and demanding shifts, can significantly impact their stress levels.
2. **Work Environment:** The physical and psychosocial aspects of the work environment, such as noise levels, safety concerns, support from colleagues and supervisors, and availability of resources, can contribute to stress.
3. **Job Control and Autonomy:** The level of control nurses have over their work, decision-making authority, and the ability to participate in important decisions can affect their stress levels.
4. **Interpersonal Relationships:** The quality of relationships with colleagues, patients, and superiors can play a crucial role in influencing stress levels.
5. **Emotional Demands:** Nurses often deal with emotionally charged situations, including patient suffering and end-of-life care, which can lead to emotional exhaustion and stress.
6. **Work-Life Balance:** The balance between work demands and personal life can significantly impact a nurse's stress levels.
7. **Job Insecurity:** Fear of job loss or uncertainty about future employment can lead to stress and anxiety among nurses.
8. **Career Development and Growth Opportunities:** The availability of career advancement opportunities and professional growth prospects can influence stress levels.
9. **Organizational Support:** The support provided by the hospital management and administration in terms of policies, recognition, and rewards for the nurses' efforts can impact their stress levels.
10. **Training and Skill Development:** Adequate training and skill development opportunities can improve nurses' confidence and reduce stress related to competency issues.
11. **Technology and Equipment:** The availability and usability of modern technology and equipment can affect the efficiency of nurses' work and influence stress levels.
12. **Work-Life Integration:** The hospital's policies and practices that support work-life integration and flexible work arrangements can influence stress levels positively.

13. **Communication and Feedback:** Effective communication channels and constructive feedback mechanisms can impact nurses' stress levels.

14. **Patient Demands and Expectations:** Meeting the diverse demands and expectations of patients and their families can be stressful for nurses.

15. **Organizational Culture:** The overall culture within the hospital, including its values, norms, and attitudes, can influence stress levels.

It's important to note that the impact of these dimensions on occupational stress can vary among individuals and may be influenced by personal factors, coping mechanisms, and other individual differences. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the specific dimensions influencing occupational stress among nurses at the private hospital in Nagappattinam, further research and data collection through surveys or interviews with the nurses themselves would be required.

OCCUPATIONAL STRESS MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES USED BY NURSES

Nurses face high levels of occupational stress due to the demanding nature of their work, long working hours, emotional challenges, and other job-related factors. To cope with and manage occupational stress, nurses employ various strategies to promote their well-being and maintain their mental and physical health. Here are some common stress management strategies used by nurses:

1. **Self-Care and Healthy Lifestyle:** Nurses prioritize self-care, including maintaining a healthy diet, getting regular exercise, and ensuring sufficient rest and sleep to rejuvenate their bodies and minds.

2. **Mindfulness and Meditation:** Practicing mindfulness and meditation techniques helps nurses stay present in the moment, reduce anxiety, and cope with stress more effectively.

3. **Support Systems:** Nurses often rely on their support systems, both personal and professional, to share their feelings, experiences, and challenges. Talking to colleagues, friends, or family members can provide emotional support and validation.

4. **Time Management:** Effective time management skills help nurses prioritize tasks, plan their day efficiently, and prevent feeling overwhelmed by their workload.

5. **Relaxation Techniques:** Nurses use relaxation techniques such as deep breathing exercises, progressive muscle relaxation, or yoga to reduce physical tension and stress.

6. **Setting Boundaries:** Establishing clear boundaries between work and personal life is crucial to prevent burnout. Nurses learn to say no to additional shifts or tasks when necessary.

7. **Humor:** Nurses often use humor to cope with stressful situations, as it can help lighten the mood and reduce tension.

8. **Education and Training:** Continuous education and training opportunities allow nurses to stay updated with the latest medical knowledge and improve their skills, leading to increased confidence and reduced stress related to competency.

9. **Seeking Professional Help:** When the stress becomes overwhelming, some nurses seek the help of counselors or therapists to work through their emotions and develop coping strategies.

10. **Peer Support Groups:** Joining support groups or participating in debriefing sessions with colleagues can provide a safe space to share experiences and gain insights into managing stress.

11. **Workplace Interventions:** Nurses may advocate for workplace interventions, such as workload adjustments, staffing improvements, or flexible scheduling, to reduce stress and improve the work environment.

12. **Healthy Coping Mechanisms:** Nurses are encouraged to adopt healthy coping mechanisms instead of turning to harmful habits like smoking or excessive alcohol consumption.

13. **Time Off and Vacations:** Taking regular breaks and vacations allows nurses to recharge and prevent burnout.

14. **Delegating Tasks:** Nurses learn to delegate tasks when appropriate, ensuring that they do not take on more than they can handle.

15. **Positive Thinking and Reframing:** Focusing on positive aspects of their work and using cognitive reframing techniques help nurses approach challenges with a more optimistic mindset.

It's important to note that not all strategies work equally for everyone, and nurses may need to experiment with different approaches to find what suits them best. Additionally, the support and understanding of hospital administrators, managers, and colleagues play a vital role in creating a conducive work environment that promotes stress management and well-being among nurses.

Conclusion

This study highlights the presence of occupational stress among nurses due to their demanding and hectic daily activities. Many nurses in the hospital industry experience physical, emotional, and psychological forms of stress, with these stress levels being statistically associated with the department they work in. To alleviate the occupational stress experienced by nurses, it is recommended that hospital executives and management take the following measures: Policy for Worker Health: Implement a policy that addresses occupational stress and includes a comprehensive assessment of work-related stress risks. This can help identify areas that need improvement and facilitate the development of targeted solutions. Learning Opportunities for Stress Management: Provide nurses with access to information and training on effective stress management strategies tailored to the nursing environment and job demands. Equipping nurses with coping mechanisms can help them better manage stress and maintain their well-being. Motivational Packages: Recognize and appreciate the crucial role nurses play in saving lives by offering motivational packages or incentives. Feeling valued and appreciated can boost morale and job satisfaction, leading to reduced stress levels. By incorporating these measures and creating a stress-free work environment, hospital management can help reduce occupational stress among nurses. Prioritizing the well-being of nursing staff ultimately benefits both the nurses and the quality of patient care they provide.

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