

Relationship between Occupational Stress and Absenteeism among Staff Nurses

Thesis

*Submitted For Partial Fulfillment of Master Degree
in Nursing Administration*

By

Amira Hassan Ibrahim Hassan Ali

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Under supervision of

Prof. Dr. Samia Adam

Professor of Nursing Administration

Faculty of Nursing- Ain Shams University

Dr. Hemat Abd Elazeem Mostafa

Lecturer of Nursing Administration

Faculty of Nursing-Ain Shams University

**Faculty of Nursing
Ain Shams University
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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قالوا

سببنا انك لا تعلم لنا
إلا ما علمتنا انك أنت
العليم العظيم

صدق الله العظيم

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Table of contents

Title	Page
List of Abbreviations	
List of Tables	
Abstract	
Introduction	1
Aim of the study	6
Review of literature	7
• Occupational stress	
Definition of stress	7
Theories of stress	11
Causes of stress	12
Signs and symptoms	16
Stress consequence	17
Types of stress	19
Stress management strategy	23
• Absenteeism	
Definition of absenteeism	31
Theories of absenteeism	34
Types of absenteeism	40
Consequences of absenteeism	40
Variables that lead to absenteeism	41
The causes of absenteeism	50
Absenteeism policies	53
Strategies for managing absenteeism	54
Role of nursing manager in absenteeism	59
Subjects and methods	60
Result	70
Discussion	107
Conclusion & Recommendations	129
Summary	132
Reference	136
Protocol	
Appendix	
Arabic summary	

List of Abbreviations

A.P.A	:	American Psychological Association.
R.C.N	:	Royal College of Nursing.
ICU	:	Intensive Care Unit.
SPSS	:	Statistical Package for Social Science.

List of tables in subjects and methods

No	Content	Page
1	Distribution of staff nurses in departments	62
2	Nurses occupational stress rating scale	64

List of tables in results

No	Content	Page
1	Socio- demographic characteristic of the studied sample.	71
2	Level of stress among staff nurses as result of death and dying.	72
3	Level of stress among staff nurses as result of disagreement among nurses.	74
4	Level of stress among staff nurses as result of uncertainty concerning treatment.	76
5	Level of stress among staff nurses as result of conflict with physician.	78
6	Level of stress among staff nurses as result of lack support from leadership.	80
7	Level of stress among staff nurses as result of workload.	82
8	Level of stress among staff nurses as result of understaffing.	84
9	Level of stress among staff nurses as result of nurses capability.	86

No	Content	Page
10	Level of stress among staff nurses as result of work environment.	88
11	Total level stress according different factors as reported by staff nurses	90
12	Absenteeism rate among staff nurses at the two hospitals.	92
13	Relationship between the total level of stress among nurse and their demographic characteristic in Ghoneim Hospital.	93
14	Relationship between the total level of stress among nurses and their demographic characteristic in Mitt Ghamer Hospital.	95
15	Relationship between absenteeism rate and age in the study setting.	97
16	Relationship between absenteeism rate and departments of the studied sample.	99
17	Relationship between absenteeism rate and years of experience of the studied nurses.	101
18	Relationship between absenteeism rate and marital status of the studied nurses.	103
19	Relationship between absenteeism rate and the position of studied nurses.	104
20	Correlation between the occupational stress and absenteeism rate in Ghoneim hospital.	105
21	Correlation between the occupational stress and absenteeism rate in Mitt Ghammer hospital.	106

Abstract

Background: Stress contributes to health problem, decreased efficiency, career change, poor patient care, absenteeism, and turnover. **Aim:** assessing level of occupational stress among staff nurses, identifying of rate absenteeism among staff nurses, and finding out the relationship between Occupational Stress and Absenteeism. **Setting:** This study was carried out in Mitt Ghammer and Ghoneim hospitals to find out the relationship between Occupational Stress and Absenteeism. **Subject:** the study included 330 staff nurses (130 nurses working in Mitt Ghammer and 200 working in Ghoneim hospitals). **Tools:** included questionnaire sheet and absenteeism record. **Result:** there is a significant correlation between occupational stress and Absenteeism. The level of occupational stress was highest at Mitt Ghammer hospital while, at Ghoneim hospital it was moderate level. Absenteeism rate was highest mean at Mitt Ghammer hospital than in Ghoneim hospital. **Conclusion:** lack of support from hospital administration and conflict with physician were the highest factors contributing to stress at Mitt Ghammer, while Ghoneim hospital nurses capabilities was the highest factor contributing to stress. **Recommendation:** work redesign plans as well as early assessment and intervention may be helpful in the reduction of job stress in staff nurse working in hospitals.

Keywords: Occupational stress, Absenteeism and staff nurse.

Introduction

Nursing is generally perceived as demanding profession. Along with the increased demand and progress in the nursing profession, stress among the nurses has also increased. Described stress response as biophysiologic in nature. When the person is subjected to a stressor, a characteristic syndrome of physical reactions will occur. The stress concept can also be seen as active in a holistic view of the person. The stress response can be physical, psychological, emotional or spiritual in nature and is usually a combination of these dimensions (*Mahadeo, 2014*).

Stress, similarly, can arise from one or more dimensions and can be either internal or external. A moderate level of stress or Eustress” is an important motivating factor and is considered normal and necessary. If stress is intense, continuous, and repeated, it becomes a negative phenomenon or “Distress”, which can lead to physical illness and psychological disorders. It is usually observed that nursing profession undergoes tremendous stress which affect on work performances of nurses and ultimately affects the patient care (*Shinde & Durgawale, 2014*).

Chronic stress takes a toll when there are additional stress factors like home stress, conflict at work, inadequate staffing, poor teamwork, inadequate training, and poor supervision. Stress is known to cause emotional exhaustion in nurses and lead to negative feelings toward those in their care. In U S, it is estimated that work stress costs the nation billions of dollars a year in lost productivity and health care expenses. Stress has a cost for individuals in terms of health, wellbeing and job dissatisfaction, as well as for organizations in terms of absenteeism and turnover, which in turn may impact upon the quality of patient care (*Shinde & Mohite, 2014*).

Absenteeism is unplanned, unjustifiable, disruptive incident. It is further characterized by the lack of physical presence of an employee at work as scheduled, extended breaks, late arrival, leaving and not doing her/his job (*Jackson, 2003, Josias, 2005 & Babaita, 2008*). Absenteeism is any failure of an employee to report for or to remain at work as scheduled, regardless of the reason. As such, it is the violation of a social obligation to be in a particular place at a particular time. Traditionally, absenteeism was viewed as an indicator of poor individual performance and a breach of an implicit contract between employee and employer (*Johns, & Rea, 2007 & Santhi et al., 2011*).

Absenteeism is major concern, its economic impact can severely affect and threatening the sustainability of any organization. Even when an absent employee receives no pay, overtime may occur or certain jobs may not be performed (*Czakan, 2005*). Absenteeism is most generally defined as the behavior of not attending work all or part of the time in a given time period for commonly accepted reasons, including: sickness, vacation, family medical leave, elder and child care, maternal and paternal leave, occupational deviance, bereavement, military duty, jury duty, and other similar or related types of activities (*Avey, et al., 2006*). Absence rate is the number of days actually used for leave from work during a specified period of them expressed as a percentage of possible work days (*Wilcox, 2008*).

Absenteeism in workplace is a result of many variable like stressor in the job environment, individual work ethic and characteristic, cohesiveness of the employees, organizational characteristics, having a voice or not and leadership. Stressors in the job environment involves workplace relationships, career development-related stressors, work overload/under load, shift work, long hours, lack of quality of physical environment, lack of job control, and poor job resources such as social support, coaching

autonomy have been identified as potential stressors that lead to absenteeism. Also Mistrust among colleagues, poor communication, low job satisfaction and poor psychological well-being that can contribute to absenteeism of nurses (*Petersen et al., 2008 & Josephson et al., 2008*).

Significance of the Study

Stress is a part of everyday life for health professionals such as nurse's physicians and hospital administrators. Occupational stress results in considerable costs to organizations in terms of absenteeism, loss of productivity, and health care resources. Lack of productivity due to occupational stress and its related effects, including staff conflicts, recruitment and retention problems, burnout, absenteeism, and rapid turn-over, and lack of job satisfaction, has been reported to cause significant monetary costs to the National Health Service [NHS] in the UK reported that organizations spend as much as \$75 billion a year on stress-related outcomes including physical injuries at work and absenteeism (*Rose et al., 2011*). While the World Health Organization (2002) estimates the cost of stress and stress-related problems to organizations to be in excess of \$150 billion annually (*Nabirye, 2010*). From the researcher's experience as staff nurse working in Mite Ghamer Kidney Hospital. She

observed, lack of nursing number in dialysis unit is one or two nurses to ten patients while the ideal work in critical units is one nurse to one patient and observed some nurses are obligated to had shift work against their preference, and others working extended shifts, all these lead to occupational stress, in addition, others accumulate their days off to the end of the month which create a lot of problems in the form of sick leave, increasing absenteeism. *(Bydawell, 2000)* states that if all the nurses within an organization collectively take their full entitlement; the organization absenteeism rate will run at approximately 4%, which is generally believed to be acceptable. Absenteeism above 5% has to be considered as very serious, across most industries 3% is considered standard *(Tonello, 2003)*. So, the present study will be conducted in an attempt to understand the relationship between nurses' occupational stress and absenteeism among staff nurses at Nephrology & urology hospital in Mite Ghamer-Dakahlya and Ghonim hospital at mansoura-Dakahlya.

Aim of the study

The Study Aims to assess the relationship between occupational stress and absenteeism among staff nurses through:

- 1-Assessing level of occupational stress among staff nurses at study setting.
- 2-Identifying rate of absenteeism among staff nurses at study setting.
- 3-Finding out the relationship between occupational stress and absenteeism among staff nurses at study setting.

Research question:

- What are occupational stress levels and absenteeism rate among the staff nurses under study?
- Is there a relationship between occupational stress and absenteeism rate among the staff nurses under study?