INTEGRATIVE REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Triggering factors of work-related stress in nursing: evidenced in literature

Fatores desencadeadores de estresse em profissionais de enfermagem no ambiente hospitalar: evidências da literatura

Kayo Henrique Jardel Feitosa Sousa 1, Jaqueline Carvalho e Silva Sales 2, Samantha Alves Fernandes 3, Maryane Francisca de Araújo Freitas 4, Patricia Maria Gomes de Carvalho 5, Dennise Alves Costa 6

ABSTRACT

Objective: To reviews scientific literature regarding the factors that trigger stress in nurses in the hospital environment. Method: This is a qualitative study, a literature review, in the databases, BVS in its sub-bases LILACS and BDENF, and in SCOPUS database. The articles were investigated in their entirety, in Portuguese, published between the years 2009 and 2013. Results: It was revealed that the most prevalent stressors in the hospital for nursing professionals are lack of professionalism, dissatisfaction with the profession, poor working conditions, lack of materials, scarce human resources and personal untrained, the division of labor, content of the task, the relations of power, hierarchy, and liability issues. Conclusion: To understand and analyze the factors that trigger stress is of great value to practitioners and institutions are essential for promoting worker health and improving the care provided by them. Descriptors: Nursing, Occupational health, Mental health, Psychological stress.

RESUMO

Objetivo: Analisar a produção científica quanto aos fatores desencadeadores de estresse em profissionais de enfermagem no ambiente hospitalar. Método: Trata-se de um estudo de cunho qualitativo, do tipo revisão da literatura, nas bases de dados BVS, em suas sub-bases LILACS e BDENF, e na base de dados SCOPUS. Foram investigados artigos na íntegra, em português, publicados entre os anos de 2009 e 2013. Resultados: Revelou-se que os estressores mais prevalentes no ambiente hospitalar para os profissionais da enfermagem são a falta de profissionalismo, descontentamento com a profissão, falta de condições de trabalho, falta de materiais, recursos humanos escassos e pessoais não treinados, a divisão do trabalho, o conteúdo da tarefa, as relações de poder, a hierarquia, e as questões de responsabilidade. Conclusão: Conhecer e analisar os fatores desencadeadores de estresse é de grande valia para os profissionais e para as instituições sendo essenciais para a promoção da saúde dos trabalhadores e para a melhoria da assistência prestada por estes. Descriptores: Enfermagem, Saúde do trabalhador, Saúde mental, Estrés psicológico.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: Analizar la literatura científica acerca de los factores desencadenantes del estrés en profesionales de enfermería en el ámbito hospitalario. Método: Se trata de un estudio de carácter cualitativo, de revisión de la literatura, en las bases de datos BVS, en sus sub-bases LILACS y BDENF, y la base de datos SCOPUS. Los artículos fueron investigados en su totalidad, en portugués, publicados entre los años 2009 y 2013. Resultados: Se reveló que los factores de estrés más frecuentes en el hospital para los profesionales de enfermería son la falta de profesionalismo, la insatisfacción con la profesión, las condiciones de trabajo deficientes, la falta de materiales, recursos humanos escasos y personal no entrenado, la división del trabajo, el contenido de la tarea, las relaciones de poder, la jerarquía, y las cuestiones de responsabilidad. Conclusion: Conocer y analizar los factores desencadenantes de estrés es de gran valor para los profesionales y las instituciones son esenciales para la promoción de la salud de los trabajadores y mejorar la atención recibida por estos. Descriptores: Enfermería, Salud ocupacional, Salud mental, Estrés psicológico.
The topic of Mental Health and Labor have been debated and studied in Brazil for a long time now however, the previously discussed problems persist. Today it is known that, the individual is exposed to various sociocultural factors, and that they are inserted a large world, therefore work is not excluded thus, consists of the same experiences. Changes in employment or in employment, such as promotions, transfers, restructuring, downgrades, shift supervisors, and additional responsibilities, often leads to anguish and anxiety, which are triggering factors of what is called stress nowadays.1,2

Stress is understood as the imbalance of the feeling of well-being that goes beyond the usual level of tolerance, as a result of work factors, and the imbalance between stress and support factors. It consists of the predisposition of the individual associated with environmental factors, in this study, work, which is an essential pathogenic determinant and situation of illness, and dismisses, often the individual's values, meanings, feelings, namely, subjectivity.1-5

The intense transformations experienced in the workplace, such as the increasing immateriality, the subjectivity of conduct and actions, and changes in the organizational work structure, contribute to the characteristic shape the quality of life of workers, for the construction of the ego and identity, obtaining pleasure, and feelings of belonging, triggering a multitude of activities in pursuit of recognition.6,7

In this context, we highlight the hospital environment as the trigger for mental suffering, by being identified as a painful and unhealthy environment. The nursing professional on a daily basis is faced with strenuous and stressful situations. It is known the need for interaction of factors and triggering events of stress, higher or lower quality, resulting from organizational structure factors with the coping resources as these would lead to improved patient stress or even its absence. Thus, focuses on the importance of detecting such inducing / triggering / trigger conditions effective for possible intervention.

Fears, struggles for power, long working hours, anxiety, coping with death, pain or suffering of others, which coupled with professional devaluation, low pay and poor conditions overwhelm coping resources of the professional precipitating physical and mental exhaustion. Experienced by the individual as a failure in adaptation to stress, causing physical exhaustion, reduced professional accomplishment depersonalization, and interfere with the quality of care provided to patients.8,9

Based on the object of this study, which is defined in the daily routine of nursing workers, and the factors that influence in their mental health, and on the considerations made has been drawn up the following guiding question: Which factors contribute to work-related stress in nursing? To answer this question it is proposed to carry out this review in order to examine the scientific literature regarding triggering factors of stress in nursing professionals within the hospital environment, in order to contribute to the construction of conditions and work environments with an emotional atmosphere committed to the professional’s mental health.

Therefore, this study is justified by the fact that the work in addition to expressing the quotidian and be fundamental for the construction of subjectivity and identity of the individual and his collectivity, is also essential to social reproduction due be the main pillar of economic production of society. Contributing to the debate about the factors related to the mental suffering of the nursing worker enabling from the results
Sousa KHJF, Sales JCS, Fernandes AS, et al. obtained a more systemized knowledge of reality in which is inscribed the problem in question. Where we believe that the knowledge gained through this will subsidize decision-making, strengthening the health of the nursing staff, allowing the definition of actions that encourage interaction between public policy, research, business and practice, producing significant improvements in the area, as well as deepening their knowledge in this area.

METHODOLOGY

This study has a qualitative approach aiming to establish the relationship of cause and effect between hospital environment and working conditions and psychological distress. The strategy used for this purpose was the bibliographic review of the literature that allows the perception of similarities and differences between the articles raised, providing a practice grounded in scientific evidence.

This is integrative review, which was carried out in accordance with the following steps: selection of the thematic issue (elaboration of guiding question), establishment of criteria for inclusion and exclusion of articles, selection of items (sample selection), analyzing and interpreting the results. The guiding question, the foundation of this study was: Which factors contribute to work-related stress in nursing?

The data collection was carried out in the database VHL (Virtual Health Library), in its sub-base LILACS (Latin American and Caribbean Literature in Health Sciences) and BDENF (Database of Nursing), using the descriptors controlled nursing, worker health, mental health and psychological stress, with the aid of Boolean algebra and; and the SCOPUS using the descriptors controlled nursing, mental health and health of the worker, with the aid of the Boolean operator J. res.: fundam. care. online 2013.dec. 5(6): 372-381

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Databases</th>
<th>Descriptors</th>
<th>Articles found</th>
<th>Articles pre-selected</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LILACS</td>
<td>Nursing; occupational health; mental health; psychological stress.</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BDENF</td>
<td>Nursing; occupational health; mental health; psychological stress.</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCOPUS</td>
<td>Nursing, mental health, occupational health.</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>399</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 - Search strategy in the database Sep/Nov, 2013

Source: Research data
For the characterization of the selected studies, a data collection instrument was adapted, containing items such as descriptors used, title, authors, and practice area, year of publication, language, outline, objectives, method, results, conclusion, recommendations, limitations and level of scientific evidence of the study, among others.

Subsequently, the critical reading in full of the 14 articles was done, and extraction of relevant information, which were organized in a concise form, to facilitate the access to the same, such as, year of publication, published journal, adopted method, geographic region and type of institution, whether public or private, in addition to the results and the main conclusions of each study.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Within the period selected, the year 2010 was presented the most published papers, a total of 06, followed by the years 2011 and 2012 with 03 articles with 03 articles and 02 articles with 2009, respectively. Bringing to light the growing concern about the quality of health services, also constituted by the health of nurses, as well as expressing interest in investigating the working conditions and operating, promoting improvements in work environments.

Among the scientific journals that have published on the subject, the Journal of School Nursing of USP stood out, with 03 articles, followed by Latin American Journal of Nursing and Gaúcha Journal of Nursing, totaling for both 04 articles. Other journals have stood out, among them, Electronic Journal of Mental Health, Alcohol and Drugs, Aquichán, Journal of Care Survey is Fundamental (online), Journal of Nursing UFPe (online), Mineira Journal of Nursing, Journal of Nursing Text Context, and Brazilian Journal of Epidemiology, together totaled 07 publications.

Table 2 presents the items according to year of publication and scientific journal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Year of Publication</th>
<th>Periodical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E1</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Latin American Journal of Nursing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E2</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Research Journal of Nursing and Care (online)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E3</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Gaúcha Magazine of Nursing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E4</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Aquichán</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E5</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Journal of Nursing UFPe (online)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E6</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Journal of the USP School of Nursing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E7</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Mineira Journal of Nursing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E8</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Latin American Journal of Nursing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E9</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Journal of Nursing Text Context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E10</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Journal of the USP School of Nursing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E11</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Brazilian Journal of Epidemiology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E12</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Journal of the USP School of Nursing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E13</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Electronic Journal of Mental Health, Alcohol and Drugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E14</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Gaúcha Magazine of Nursing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Research data

In relation to the authors and type of study, it was observed that the authors have published more than one article involving the same thematic, as the methodological approach the predominance is the qualitative (06), followed by cross-referencing (03), theoretical reflection (01), literature review (01), quantitative (01), cohort study (01), explanatory exploratory qualitative (01). Therefore, it is important to emphasize that the majority of publications about stress triggers from the subjective and abstract viewpoint, rather than from the point of view measured in part by being the work, in contemporary times, devoid of objective behaviors and actions, and only, material. The results are shown in table 3.
Sousa KHJF, Sales JCS, Fernandes AS, et al.

In qualitative studies, the topics most discussed were the relationship between work, health and illness, the triggering factors of work-related stress in nursing, and the importance of identifying and analyzing the triggering factors of stress and coping mechanisms.

**Table 3 - Distribution of selected articles, second authors and type of study - Brazil - 2009 to 2013**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Type of Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E1</td>
<td>Himmel VA, Baptista CCP, Felli YE</td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E2</td>
<td>Shinno ZR, Silva de Paula G, Silva JLL</td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E3</td>
<td>Prestes FC, Beck CIC, Silva RM, Favares JP, Camponogara SA, Burg G</td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E4</td>
<td>Silva de Paula G, Reis JF, Dias LC, Dutra VD, Braga ALS, Cortez EA</td>
<td>Explanatory exploratory qualitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E5</td>
<td>Martins CC, Valente GCC</td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E6</td>
<td>Martins JT, Robazzi MLC, Dobroff ACC</td>
<td>Theoretical Reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E7</td>
<td>Rodrigues TDF</td>
<td>Literature review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E8</td>
<td>Urbanetto JS, Hofmeister E, Negri OS</td>
<td>Transversal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E9</td>
<td>Pinheiro do Costa RE, Poli de Figueiredo E</td>
<td>Transversal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4 - Triggering Factors of stress in nursing professionals within the hospital environment - Brazil - 2009 to 2013**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Triggering Factors of stress in nursing professionals within the hospital environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E12</td>
<td>Reduced number of employees and equipment, workload of many days of work without play, poor attendance and prioritization of tasks, isolation and lack of recognition of colleagues in work environment; coping with death, complex activities; exposure to biological hazards; discrimination in work environment, changes imposed innovatively; inadequate remuneration; lack of time, lack of work pace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E13</td>
<td>Intense work pace, excessive demand for hospitalized patient's time to perform tasks; complexity of care, low level of social interaction with colleagues and bosses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E14</td>
<td>High demand: work, income, multiple jobs, night work, low job control, low self-esteem, everyday situations work, concern with executing activities on time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E15</td>
<td>Time working all shifts in hospital, interpersonal relationship, distribution of tasks, personal emblematic.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of the articles are from the Southeast (05), demonstrating the concentration of publications on this topic in this region, and one article takes its as a study object 05 university hospitals, one in each region, plus another article studies two hospitals, one in the southern region, and another in the southeast, and the other 02 articles are only theoretical in nature, without reference to geographic region. These data allow us to infer that some peculiarities can be identified in some studies, such as the presence of endemic diseases in some professionals from the northern region; however, the triggers of stress are felt in any area, whether to a greater or lesser extent, and short or long-term consequences.

Regarding the differences between private and public institutions, only 01 study sought to identify the differences in public or private environmental stressors; emphasizes the number 10 articles against the backdrop of public institutions, and the context of an article convening the private institution SUS (Unified Health System), beyond, as cited in the previous variable 02 articles this condition does not apply, because these are theoretical studies.

In table 4, the triggering factors of work-related stress in nursing are presented.

**Table 4 - Triggering Factors of stress in nursing professionals within the hospital environment - Brazil - 2009 to 2013**

Source: Research data
This session intends to present the product of this review highlighting the main results and conclusions obtained from articles found; all 14 articles are detailed, by means of a synthesis, mentioning those most important considerations about the triggering stress factors of nursing professionals in the hospital environment.

The work has a psychological function and is one of the great foundations on the constitution of the subject and its network of meanings. This enables the construction of an armature for psychopathological decompensation (rupture of psychic equilibrium manifested by the appearance of a mental illness), therefore, the subject becomes able to control the pain through their defenses, and coping supports such as coworkers, without allowing decompensation.2,6

In studies concerning factors related to mental health worker, were revealed through the information extracted, which resentments, work pressure, fatigue, ambiguity in the relationship with their bosses, fear, distrust, depersonalization, feeling of worthlessness, are the major villains when it comes to mental health.4,6

Applying these concepts and factors for the hospital, has been among the stressors, the ones shown were the lack of professionalism, dissatisfaction with the profession, poor working conditions, lack of materials, scarce human resources and personal untrained, the division of labor, content of the task, the relations of power, hierarchy, and liability issues.

More than half of the sample of this research, articles E1, E2, E3, E6, E9, E06, E07, E08, E12, and E13, highlights the lack of recognition as one of the biggest stressors, being considered as a crucial element for professional satisfaction. It is blatantly obvious the influence of income on mental health, became evident the smaller the higher income is the prevalence of mental...
Another sector, shown by this sample, mainly in studies E5, E6, and E8, were the emergency units. With this study, it was observed that in emergency services to prevent or minimize the illness professional is necessary to identify the risks. It becomes evident from the studies, which the nurse's work is not only care, but also, bureaucratic, which is crucial factor for the mental health of nursing professionals. The precarious conditions of work, relationship difficulties with their colleagues, the reduction of feelings of success with the job, and above all, the minimum time for completion of the service, because it is an environment in which the accelerated pace is crucial to saving lives, are factors that cause damage to the mental health of professionals.

Study E3 stated that the work of nursing aims to care central to human being and his family, and thus, needed a complexity of actions and especially the love of work, aspects that go beyond the physical-organizational structure. They even cite that for the work in nursing, are necessary some priorities, first among them being the love that motivates and satisfies the professionals, recognition at work, the experiences of pleasure, the pleasure in helping the patient by means of pain relief, and the suffering, the pleasure of tranquility, and a duty free of complications; that will be ways of living and minimize the feelings of helplessness in the face of the suffering of another.

Comparing public and private services, study E14 evidence through the application of the Bianchi Stress Scale(BSS) in a sample of 26 nurses intensivists, being 14 of public institutions and 12 private institutions, that the working conditions of play important role in the development of stress, showing as being of low level stress direction in private institutions and medium-level in public institutions, this was also highlighted in studies E5, E11 and E12, highlighting that the precarious structures, favor the a reduced the pleasure, and development of stress among nursing professionals.

Several factors intrigue the minds of professionals. Thus, according to Dejourian perspective, one must consider many aspects when it comes to stress in nurses, i.e. break the Taylorist principles seeking new ways of working in the health of healthcare professionals. Therefore, to solve this problem or to prevent that this will not happen, it is necessary to consider the stress of nurses in order to understand their causes, contributing to create mechanisms for coping with effective, as is evident in study E6.

They are cognitive and behavioral efforts, educational actions, or collective reflections, as cited in the studies E10 and E11, providing not only a transfer of knowledge, but, above all, create strategies concerned with interpersonal relations, therefore, these influence in the nursing care. Thus, one sees that one of the best strategies to deal with the triggers of stress would be the meetings systematized of nursing staff, where they should be pointed out the feelings, the pleasures, the anxieties, conflicts and troubles, thus propitiating the minimization of stress and psychological distress.8,19

Although the mental health of nursing professionals is, still a reality that generates many questions it is present in the Brazilian healthcare scenario. The bibliographic findings allowed us to say that this issue has been debated in recent years, proving by the number of twelve (12) publications between the years of 2010 and 2012, which, is the Journal of the USP School of Nursing, with 03 publications, and a qualitative methodological approach, with 06 publications, evidencing the interest of researchers and
Sousa KHJF, Sales JCS, Fernandes AS, et al. professionals of nursing by feelings and experiences meanings in their work environment.

The findings evidenced in studies, even being subjective information, represent experiences and experiences of workers, which enabled to identify the aspects that have been contributing to the stress, characterized by resentment, fatigue, fear, mistrust, depersonalization, feelings of worthlessness, in their majority of times come from unfortunate organization of work, and of their conditions.

In this regard, the work developed by the nursing staff, filled with ambiguous feelings, sometimes with experiences of pleasure and suffering, conducive to the emergence of emotional exhaustion, come from such practices, requiring being detected. Thus, to understand and analyze the factors that trigger stress is of great value to practitioners and institutions are essential for promoting the worker health of and to improve the care provided by them. These Actions that prioritize the mutual dialog and collective activities, strengthening the feeling of pleasure, and of the union, because it is well known that the interpersonal relationship negative in nursing team, and this with the multi professional team is one of the biggest contributors to the development of stress, because, besides being stressor, does not allow the creation of coping mechanisms, through active communication in the professional environment.

Thus, it is hoped that this study can contribute to the production of knowledge and in developing research counterparts that focus on the multidimensionality of insults to mental health of nursing workers.

REFERENCES


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Triggering factors of work-related stress...


380
Sousa KHJF, Sales JCS, Fernandes AS, et al.

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