METHOD
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DESIGN

The aim of the present investigation was to study Occupational Stress and Burnout among Nurses in relation to Personality, Self-Esteem and Ways of Coping. In addition the three age groups of nurses were also compared on all the measured variables.

SAMPLE

The sample comprised of 300 professionally trained staff nurses from various hospitals of a major city of North India. Both B.Sc. Nursing staff and General Nursing staff were taken in the sample. The sample was selected by simple incidental random sampling. The entire sample was divided according to the age, 135 nurses were found to be in the age range of 21-30 years (mean age 25 years) and were taken as Group-I, 104 nurses were found to be in the age range of 31-40 years (mean age 35 years) and were taken as Group-II, 61 nurses were found to be in the age range of 41-50 years (mean age 45 years) and were taken as Group-III.

TESTS AND TOOLS

I Occupational Stress scale for nurses (Dawkins, 1985)
II Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach and Jackson, 1981)
III Hardiness Assessment Scale (Kobasa et al., 1982)
IV Rosenberg's Self Esteem scale (Rosenberg, 1965)
V Coping check list (Rao, et al. 1989)
I. OCCUPATIONAL STRESS SCALE FOR NURSES (DAWKINS, 1985)

MODIFIED VERSION

This is a modified version of the Nurses' Occupational Stress Scale (Dawkins, 1985). Since the original tool was found lengthy and time consuming, there arose a need to abridge it. The same was done by Usha (1992). The response pattern was Yes/No format. All the 'Yes' responses were given a score of one and all the 'No' responses were given a score of zero. It has been used in India by Usha (1992). The modified version of the items and their scoring pattern were checked for content validity with the help of experts working in various fields like psychiatry, psychology, social-work and nursing. The final scale contains total 28 items and has six dimensions i.e. Administrative Issues (7-items), Staff performance (3-items), Limited Resources (5-items), Staff conflict (4-items), Scheduling Issues (4-items), Negative patient characteristics (5-items). The test retest reliability was .68 and validity was .82.

II Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach and Jackson, 1981)

Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI, 1981) was used in the present investigation to assess Burnout among Nurses. This tool is designed to assess three aspects of the Burnout syndrome: Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization and Lack of Personal Accomplishment. Each aspect is measured by a separate sub-scale. The Emotional Exhaustion subscale assesses feelings of being emotionally overextended and exhausted by one's work. The Depersonalization subscale measures an unfeeling and impersonal response towards recipients of one's service, care, treatment or instruction. The Personal Accomplishment subscale assesses
feelings of competence and successful achievement in one’s work with people. The frequency of response pattern is assessed on a 6 point, fully anchored response format. In total there are 22 items in the inventory, 9 of which measure Emotional-Exhaustion, 5 items measured Depersonalization and 8 items measure Personal Accomplishment. Burnout is conceptualized as a continuous variable, ranging from low to moderate to high degrees of experienced feelings. It is not viewed as a dichotomous variable, which either absent or present. A high degree of Burnout is reflected in high scores on Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization subscale and in low scores on the Personal Accomplishment subscale. As regards reliability and validity of MBI, the internal consistency coefficient for MBI ranged from .71 to .90 Test retest (2-4 weeks) reliability ranges from .53 to .82. The MBI is a valid instrument as reported by the authors because it correlated with behavioural ratings by observers, with the presence of certain job characteristics expected to contribute to Burnout, and with measures of various outcomes hypothesized to be related to Burnout (Maslach and Jackson, 1981). This test has been widely used in India by Gupta and Dan (1990), Mohan et al (1996), Sehgal & Saini (1998), Sundeep (2001).

III Hardiness Assessment Scale (Abridged Version)
(Kobasa, 1982)

The Hardiness Assessment Scale (Abridged version) was used in the present investigation to assess Hardiness among nurses. The scale has 12 items designed to measure the three components of Hardiness: Control, Commitment and Challenge. 4-items each were distributed for three components of Hardiness. The coefficient of Alpha of total
scale is .81 and .72 (Kobasa et al, 1982). Scale consists of list of statements and subjects were asked whether they agree or disagree with these statements (0=strongly agree to 3=strongly disagree) Hardiness Scores were added. This scale has been used by McCranie et al (1987), Allred and Smith (1989) Rodney (2000) in India by Mohan & Thakur (2001) and found to have adequate reliability and validity.

IV Rosenberg’s Self Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965)

The Rosenberg’s Self Esteem scale measures the self acceptance aspect of Self Esteem. The scale consists of 10 items answered on a four point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Since all the items revolve around liking and/or approving of the self acceptance aspect of Self Esteem more than it does with other factors. The scale was originally developed for the use of high school students and this has been used in a wide variety of samples since then. The test-retest coefficient correlation is .85 (Silber and Trippette, 1965). They found that the scale correlated from .56 to .83 with several similar measures and clinical assessment. It is correlated .59 with Coopersmith’s self esteem inventory. The test has been widely used in India and found to have adequate Reliability and Validity. This test has also been used in India by Mohan & Sarin (1987) and Sehgal & Savneet (1990), Mohan & Kakkar (1991).

V Coping checklist (Rao, et al., 1989)

Coping checklist was used in the present study to assess the Coping behaviour of staff nurses. It comprises of 70-items describing a broad range of behavioral, emotional and cognitive responses that may be used to
handle stress. Items were to be answered on a dichotomous Yes/No format indicative of the presence or absence of a particular coping behaviour. Response 'Yes' is given score of one and 'No' is given zero. This scale has 7-sub scales developed on an 'apriori' basis and validated in a normal, adult, community sample. There is one problem focused scale (problem solving), five Emotion focused Scales (Distraction positive, Distraction Negative, Acceptance, Denial and Use of Religion) and the last one is Social Support which is a combination of both problem and emotion focused coping. The score for each sub scale is the sum total of the 'Yes' responses scored as one. The test retest reliability was 0.74 and the internal consistency (Alpha) ranges from 0.75 to 0.85 indicating adequate reliability. This test has been used in India by Albuquerque et al (1990), Daka et al (1995), Rao et al (2000).

PROCEDURE

The subjects were selected by simple incidental random sampling method. They were contacted personally with the help of Nursing Superintendents, Floor Supervisors, Ward In-charges etc. and were assured that any information given by them would be kept strictly confidential. They were requested to be honest and truthful. A set of five questionnaires was given to each subject. Since subjects were not allowed to fill the Performas during their duty hours so they were requested to fill them in their off duty hours.
INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Instructions for Occupational Stress Scale

Please answer each question by putting a tick mark over the 'Yes' or 'No' following the statement. Please check that you have answered all the questions.

Instructions for Maslach Burnout Inventory

There are 22 statements about job-related feelings. Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way about your job. If you have never had this feeling then write '0' (Zero) before the statement and if you have had this feeling 'a few times a year or less' then write '1' (one), if 'once a month or less' then '2' (two), if a few times a month then put '3' (three), if 'once a week' then '4', if a few times a week then '5' and if 'Every day' then put '6' (six) before the statement.

Instructions for the Hardiness Assessment Scale

Write down how much you agree or disagree with given statements by putting '0' (Strongly disagree), '1' (mildly disagree), '2' (mildly agree), '3' (strongly agree) against each statement.

Instructions for Self-Esteem Scale

Write down how much you agree or disagree with the given statements by putting '1' (Strongly Agree), '2' (Agree), '3' (Disagree), '4' (Strongly Disagree) against each statement.
Instructions for Coping checklist

Please answer each question by putting a tick mark (✓) under ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ following the questions. Please remember to answer each question.

SCORING

All the above-mentioned tests viz Occupational Stress Scale for Nurses, Maslach Burnout Inventory, Hardiness Assessment Scale, Self Esteem Scale, and Coping checklist were scored according to the procedure given in the respective manuals. The raw scores obtained were analyzed statistically.