

Factors Associated with Workplace Violence Among Nurses: A Cross-Sectional Study in the Southeastern United States

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Introduction

Workplace violence is a significant issue in nursing. It includes physical, verbal, sexual, and psychological abuse directed toward nurses by patients, family members, or coworkers. Nursing is among the professions at greatest risk for workplace violence. This increases stress, burnout, job dissatisfaction, absenteeism, and turnover rates. Understanding the factors associated with workplace violence can help healthcare organizations develop interventions to improve safety and well-being for nurses.

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Purpose

The purpose of the study was to examine factors that affect workplace violence among nurses working in an academic medical center in the southeastern United States.

Aim 1: Examine workplace violence exposure by education level.

Aim 2: Compare workplace violence exposure across different practice settings.

Design

This study used a cross-sectional secondary analysis of survey data collected from 342 nurses employed at an academic medical center in the southeastern United States. The study identified factors associated with workplace violence exposure using hierarchical logistic regression analyses.

Results

Out of 342 nurses in the study, 61.7% reported experiencing or witnessing workplace violence. Psychiatric nurses reported the highest exposure rate at 78.8%, followed by trauma/emergency services at 64.9%, oncology services at 61.1%, and general medical services at 54.0%. Factors associated with increased workplace violence exposure included being older than 25 years old, being single, holding a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree, and working regular day or night shifts. Despite the high rates of workplace violence, only 21.3% of nurses reported receiving professional treatment for trauma.

Conclusion

Workplace violence is a common yet serious issue among nurses, especially for those working in psychiatric and emergency settings. The study demonstrated that hospitals should implement interventions to prevent workplace violence, enforce reporting systems, provide education on de-escalation techniques, and increase access to counseling and support services. Addressing workplace violence is crucial to improving nurse safety, retention, and overall well-being.

