



Original Article

Effects of Absenteeism in Nursing Profession

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ABSTRACT

Absenteeism might be a sign of management problems, like low employee morale or a toxic workplace. The nurses' frequent absences from work ultimately have an impact on the hospitals' ability to deliver high-quality treatment due to the workload placed on the other personnel.

Objective: To find out the effects of absenteeism in nursing profession. **Methods:** A descriptive cross sectional study was conducted at DHQ Hospital Muzaffargarh. The population of current study was 120 registered nurses working in different wards of hospital. The inclusion criteria of current study were the nurses having at least 1-year experience and have permanent job in hospital. Data were collected through structured questionnaire. It has two parts. 1st part consisted of demographic information and 2nd part consisted of factors contributing to absenteeism. Data were entered and analyzed by using SPSS 25.0. **Results:** Total 120 nurses were enrolled in current study the mean age of participants were 41.0 ± 3.24 and they had 3.2 ± 2.21 years of experience. Majority of nurses were females (103) and married (87) and lived in rural area (86). The most common factor of absenteeism in increased work load 52(43.3%), managerial issues 51(42.5%), lack of motivation 47(39.1%), favoritism among nurse's staff by higher authorities 44(36.6%) and not willing to accept allocated duties 39(32.5%). **Conclusions:** The main reasons for absence, according to a recent research, are lack of interest, high workload, stress, and family issues. By addressing staff members' issues, nurse managers can lower absenteeism.

INTRODUCTION

Despite the fact that strategies and initiatives to reduce absenteeism have been developed, it remains a global issue that costs billions of dollars annually [1]. This is supported by a research published in 2011 by Walker and Bamford, which details the causes of absence from work. The effects of employee absenteeism in European healthcare systems have included decreased patient satisfaction and higher financial loss for the healthcare facilities [2]. In addition to affecting an employee's career, absenteeism also has a negative impact on an organization's bottom line. Absenteeism might be a sign of management problems, like low employee morale or a toxic workplace. Employees, coworkers, and bosses do not want absenteeism. It is crucial to gain a deeper understanding of potential causes, particularly those that are related to the workplace [3]. Nursing personnel makes up 40-60% of all

human resources employed in hospitals, nursing is regarded as one of the largest departments in medical facilities. Because they are in constant contact with patients and spend the majority of their time on tasks related to patients, nurses are a crucial member of the medical team [4]. The shortage of nurses that results from nurse absenteeism has a direct impact on patient care, on an organization, and its productivity, making it a global problem [5]. The routine work in a healthcare setting becomes disorganized when nurses are absent from work [6]. There are numerous factors, including job satisfaction, illness and family obligations [7], physical health of the patient, burnout, overwork, environmental circumstances, inequality or favoritism, lack of motivation, strikes, low pay, and a lack of incentives and rewards [8, 9]. High rates of turnover and absenteeism negatively affect the

productivity of nurses at work, and ultimately have an effect on their management both their personal and professional lives, as well as employment satisfaction level [10]. The nurses' frequent absences from work ultimately have an impact on the hospitals' ability to deliver high-quality treatment due to the workload placed on the other personnel [11]. Yet, bad working conditions are also significant and need emphasis of the administration to avoid the absenteeism of the personnel from workplace [12]. Employees who work in bad working conditions face challenges such as a lack of basic resources, a poor working environment, pressure to complete tasks quickly, severe temperatures, crowding of patients' relatives, poor lighting, inadequate supervisor assistance, and a lack of enthusiasm [13]. Such poor working conditions affect an employee's involvement and productivity at work, which ultimately results in absences from work. Therefore, this study was conducted to find out the effects of absenteeism in nursing profession.

METHODS

A descriptive cross sectional study was conducted at DHQ Hospital Muzaffargarh from March 2021 to May 2021. Sample size was calculated by Cochran formula is used to calculate sample size by taking margin of error (e) 0.05, an estimated proportion of population (p) 0.5, population of 180, and $Z_{(a/2)}$ score from the Z table at 95% confidence interval which was 1.96. The final sample size, based on limited population was calculated to be 120 registered nurses working in different wards of hospital were recruited by consecutive sampling technique. The inclusion criteria of current study were the nurses having at least 1-year experience and have permanent job in hospital. all the nursing staff who don't have permanent job or have additional duties were excluded from the study. Data were collected through developed structured questionnaire. It has two parts. 1st part consist of demographic information and 2nd part consists of factors contributing to absenteeism. Data were entered and analyzed by using SPSS 25.0. Descriptive analysis was conducted. For quantitative variables Mean \pm SD was calculated and for qualitative frequency and percentages was calculated.

RESULTS

Total 120 nurses were enrolled in current study the mean age of participants were 41.0 ± 3.24 and they had 3.2 ± 2.21 years of experience. Majority of nurses were females (103) and married (87) and lived in rural area (86) (Table 1).

Table 1: Characteristics of Participants

Variables	Mean \pm SD/ F (%)
Age	41.0 ± 3.24
Year of Experiences	3.2 ± 2.21

Gender	
Male	17 (14.17)
Female	103 (85.83)
Marital status	
Married	87 (72.5)
Unmarried	33 (27.5)
Residential area	
Rural	68 (56.66)
Urban	52 (43.33)

Table 2 shows the factor which leads to absenteeism in nurses. The most common factor of absenteeism in increased work load 52(43.3%), managerial issues 51(42.5%), lack of motivation 47(39.1%), favoritism among nurse's staff by higher authorities 44(36.6%), not willing to accept allocated duties 39(32.5%) and family issues 48(40.0%) (Table 2).

Table 2: Factors contributing to Absenteeism

Factors	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Strongly disagree	Disagree
Lack of motivation	47(39.1%)	34 (28.3%)	12 (10.0%)	20 (16.0%)	9 (7.5%)
Unwilling to accept allocated duties	39(32.5%)	58 (48.3%)	9 (7.5%)	9 (7.5%)	5 (4.16%)
Managers in this institution have concern for stress prevention strategies.	10(8.3%)	21 (17.5%)	17 (14.1%)	28 (23.3%)	44 (36.6%)
Favoritism	44(36.6%)	37 (30.8%)	5 (4.1%)	22 (18.3%)	12 (10.0%)
Increased work load due to low staff	52(43.3%)	45 (37.5%)	3 (2.5%)	13 (10.8%)	7 (5.8%)
Managerial issues	51(42.5%)	33 (27.5%)	12 (10.0%)	14 (11.6%)	12 (10.0%)
Family issues	48(40.0%)	25 (20.8%)	12 (10.0%)	14 (11.6%)	12 (10.0%)

DISCUSSION

In order to acquire knowledge, innovate, and develop one's skills in order to achieve one's personal and professional goals, absenteeism is a significant issue. In current study different contributing factors were determined which leads to absenteeism in nursing staff. Majority of these factors were increased work load, managerial problems, lack of encouragement and motivation and favoritism. These factors influence the performance of nursing staff as well [14]. The findings of current study reported that low staff availability leads to increased work load and absenteeism. These findings were compared by a study which also reported similar results. The study revealed that due to shortage staff the work load of nurses increased which leads to absenteeism in organization. This problem significantly affects the sustainability of the institution [15]. In another study it was determined that nursing professionals function in an unhealthy atmosphere, both physically and mentally, and they are subjected to difficult working conditions. This makes it more likely that they will be absent from work [16]. Moreover, due to their regular exposure to the pain and suffering of patients and their families, nurses working in hospitals are prone to

experiencing both physical and emotional stress, which increases absenteeism [17]. In current study it was reported that 52(43.3%) nurse respondent that the increased work load is another factor for absenteeism. Similar to this, a 2009 study by Pillay found that 85% of nurses were absent from their jobs as a result of an excessive workload, lengthy shifts, and other variables that make nurses more stressed and promote absenteeism [18]. It was determined that a high workload made it difficult for nurses to take breaks or unwind, which contributed to their stress levels and absence [19]. The results of another study supports the findings of current study. It was revealed that Nurse absenteeism was attributed to a variety of factors, including family responsibilities, a lack of motivation to come to work, illness, financial concerns, favoritism, unfriendly nurse managers, long hours, an increased workload, unsatisfactory working conditions, a lack of equipment, unfair promotions and the selection of nurses for training, staff shortages, a lack of a reward system, and illogical decision-making. Nurse absenteeism may be a result of personal, professional, and organizational issues, further weakening the healthcare industry in the face of a lack of both human and mechanical resources[20].

CONCLUSIONS

It was concluded from current study that lack of motivation, work load, stress, family issues favoritism are the main contributing factors of absenteeism. By addressing staff members' issues, nurse managers can help minimize absenteeism and boost productivity, staff morale, reduce medical risks, and create happier patients.

Authors Contribution

Conceptualization: SP

Methodology: RK, SA

Formal Analysis: SP

Writing-review and editing: SP, SA

All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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