EXHAUSTION, DISENGAGEMENT, RESILIENCE, AND JOB SATISFACTION OF NURSE-EDUCATORS

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ABSTRACT

Almost all nursing schools in the Philippines are now faced with considerable number of issues and challenges since the sudden fall of the demand for the profession. With the occurrence of this national phenomenon and the number of labor required in the academe, the work of nurse-educators might be affected. Therefore, this study sought to determine if exhaustion, disengagement, and resilience significantly predicted Filipino nurse-educators’ level of job satisfaction. A correlational design was used; through convenience sampling, one hundred nine nursing faculty members from the different provinces of Central Luzon were recruited. Multiple regression analysis showed that disengagement ($p=.001$) and resilience ($p=.028$) were statistically and significantly related to job satisfaction, but not exhaustion ($p=.605$). However, disengagement and resilience explained only 17.8% of the variance; thus, further research is recommended to explore other variables that could predict nurse-educators’ job satisfaction.

Keywords: exhaustion, disengagement, resilience, satisfaction, nurse-educators, Philippines

In the Philippines, most nursing schools are faced with considerable number of issues and challenges since the sudden fall of the demand for the profession. With the occurrence of this national phenomenon and the number of work required in the academe, nurse-educators could possibly be very stressful and might cause them exhaustion, work disengagement, and job dissatisfaction.

Literature suggests that burnout and resilience levels, as well as job satisfaction, are critical factors in providing quality nursing education (Gormley, 2003) but no research has been conducted in the Philippines focusing on these three variables on nurse-educators after a thorough search of literature in different search engines and databases (ProQuest, EBSCOhost, Google Scholar). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to determine the levels of burnout, resilience, and job satisfaction of nursing faculty amidst the rapid downfall of the labor force in the Philippine nursing education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teaching the art and science of nursing is a dynamic, complex, demanding, and multifaceted job (Thorpe & Kalischuk, 2003). Nurse-educators carry a large volume of responsibility—teach and counsel students, work with papers and extracurricular activities in a limited time— that may put them at risk for burnout (Bourcier, 1986 as cited in Sarmiento, Laschinger, & Iwasiw, 2004). The concept of burnout can be well-defined as a condition of psychological problems experienced as a result of work-related stress (Bakker, Demerouti, & Verbeke, 2004; Taciano, Denny, Ameratunga, Robinson, & Merry, 2008).
Although burnout is a relatively new concept, attention must be given since this could possibly bring out mental and physical exhaustion, work disengagement, and diminished job performance (Thomas, 1992). According to Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, and Schaufeli (2001), “exhaustion is a consequence of intensive physical, affective, and cognitive strain” (p. 2) while “disengagement refers to distancing oneself from one’s work, and experiencing negative attitudes toward the work object, work content, or in one’s work in general” (p. 3).

In several studies, it was reported that nurse-educators with higher levels of empowerment (Bilge, 2006; Sarmiento et al., 2004) and faculty mentoring (Chung & Kowalski, 2012) may yield lower levels of burnout and greater work satisfaction. While advanced age and increased workload (Maslach & Leiter, 2005 as cited in Spurluck, 2008), and lack of social or administrative appreciation and support (Gavish & Friedman, 2010; Talmor, Reiter, & Feigin, 2005) greatly contribute to faculty burnout.

However, despite the several challenges Filipino nurse-educators are facing, many of them still choose to remain in the workforce; hence, it is important to consider the resilience levels of the nursing faculty and try to see how they cope with these difficulties. As defined by others, resilience is a dynamic, innate life force process (Grafton, Gillespie, & Henderson, 2010) that allows an individual to face stress, successfully spring back and cope with pressure, and function beyond standard in spite of great adversity (Grotberg, 1997 as cited in Tait, 2008; Rutter, 1993 as cited in Tusaie & Dyer, 2004).

Studies have reported that burnout and resilience indexes of nursing faculty may influence their level of job satisfaction (Martin, 1991). Moreover, professional autonomy, leaders’ behavior, organizational climate and characteristics, idealized influence, intellectual stimulation and contingent reward leadership, and faculty rank and length of service strongly influence an individual’s overall job satisfaction (Gormley, 2003; Oshagbemi, 2003; Shieh, Mills, & Waltz, 2001).

**STUDY PURPOSE AND HYPOTHESIS**

The study sought to determine if exhaustion, disengagement, and resilience significantly predicted Filipino nurse-educators’ level of job satisfaction. It was, therefore, hypothesized that there is no significant relationship between the predictor and dependent variables.

**METHOD**

**Research Design**

A descriptive correlational design was used in this study to measure the relationship between nurse-educators’ exhaustion, disengagement, and resilience indexes to their job satisfaction levels.

**Instruments**

The Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI) is a 16-item questionnaire that measures the exhaustion ($\alpha=0.80$), disengagement ($\alpha=0.82$), and overall burnout ($\alpha=0.928$) levels of the participants (Tilakdharee, Ramidial, & Parumasur, 2010). Responses were recorded on a four-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 4 (strongly disagree). Demerouti, Mostert, and Bakker (2010) noted that items 1, 3R, 6R, 7, 9R, 11R, 13, and 15 measure employees’ work disengagement; while items 2R, 4R, 5, 8R, 10, 12R, 14, and 16 measure exhaustion (R means reversed item when the scores should be such that higher scores indicate more burnout). Exhaustion scores ≥2.25 and disengagement scores ≥2.10 are considered high.
The Resilience Assessment Questionnaire (RQ) is a 32-item tool which measured the eight dimensions of resilience (self-assurance, personal vision, flexible and adaptable, organised, problem solver, interpersonal competence, socially connected, and active) using a five-point Likert scale. The overall possible maximum and minimum scores are 160 and 32 respectively. The overall scores are divided into four groups: not very resilient (32-60), somewhat resilient (61-115), resilient (116-140), and very resilient (141-160). The Organisation Health Psychologists (n.d.) noted that “the questionnaire is not psychometric so it reflects both time and mood…the results do not resonate with individual perceptions of ourselves, and therefore, have face validity” (p. 1).

The Nursing Faculty Satisfaction Questionnaire (NFSQ), a 42-item inventory answerable by a five-point Likert scale, measured five factors of nurse-educators’ job satisfaction: academic atmosphere, benefits of the job, service components of the job, research components of the job, and the philosophical framework of the institution (overall reliability is 0.92) (Martin, 1991).

In addition to these instruments, the demographic profile of the respondents was also taken into consideration for description purposes.

Participants and Data Collection

A convenience sample of 109 nurse-educators from different private and public higher education institutions (HEIs) in Bulacan, Pampanga, Tarlac, and Zambales were recruited in this study. Data were collected by intermediaries (deans/chairs) through in-person distribution of the questionnaires during the participants’ available time. The explanation of the study purpose, distribution, completion, and retrieval of the instrument were accomplished approximately in 30 minutes.

Ethical Considerations

A written consent, containing entire nature of the study, was given to the deans of the different nursing schools in Central Luzon. Participation of the respondents was voluntary; thus, answering the survey tool implied consent. All gathered data were treated with utmost confidentiality and no identifying information was reported in this study.

Data Analysis

Using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20, descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage distribution, mean, and standard deviation were used to determine the level of nurse educators’ exhaustion, disengagement, resilience, and job satisfaction. On the one hand, multiple regression was used to determine the relationship of nurse-educators’ exhaustion, disengagement, and resilience indexes to their job satisfaction levels.

RESULTS

One hundred nine nurse-educators from Bulacan (23.9%), Pampanga (61.5%), Tarlac (8.3%), and Zambales (6.4%) were recruited in this study. Majority of the participants are ranked by their institutions as instructors (56%), hold masterate degrees in nursing (94.5%), and are mostly tenured (67%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exhaustion</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disengagement</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilience</td>
<td>133.2</td>
<td>12.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Satisfaction</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>0.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results showed that the participants are disengaged to work as evidenced by low exhaustion ($x=2.16$, $SD=0.42$) and high disengagement ($x=2.11$, $SD=0.42$) scores; however, data revealed that nurse-educators are still resilient ($x=133.2$, $SD=12.78$), but are indifferent towards job satisfaction ($x=2.2$, $SD=0.57$) (Table 1). Table 2. Regression coefficients of the predictor variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>Sig</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>1.891</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exhaustion</td>
<td>-.071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disengagement</td>
<td>-.435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilience</td>
<td>.009</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Dependent variable: Job satisfaction

A multiple regression analysis was used to determine if exhaustion, disengagement, and resilience (predictor variables) significantly predicted nurse-educators’ level of job satisfaction. The results indicated that disengagement and resilience explained 17.8% of the variance ($F(2,106)=11.49$, $p=0.001$). Also, it was found that both disengagement ($B=-.435$, $p=0.001$) and resilience ($B=.009$, $p=.028$) statistically and significantly predicted job satisfaction (Table 2). On the other hand, exhaustion was not seen as a significant predictor to job satisfaction ($B=-.071$, $p=.605$).

**DISCUSSION**

This study sought to determine if exhaustion, disengagement, and resilience significantly predicted Filipino nurse-educators’ level of job satisfaction. It was found that nursing faculty members are disengaged to work. Tilakdharee et al. (2010) believed that these individuals are more likely to separate themselves from work and develop antagonistic attitudes towards it.

Surprisingly, despite the occupational stress they are experiencing, nurse-educators are still resilient and that they could still adapt positively and successfully even in the presence of adversity. Jackson, Firtko, and Edenborough (2007) found that nurses, as compared with other professionals, have innate system of personal resilience, which could possibly explain why they can survive, thrive, and succeed in this challenging time (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004).

It was also noted that the participants are indifferent as to job satisfaction. They are neither dissatisfied nor satisfied with their work. This is quite different to what other researchers have found. In Taiwan and in West Virginia, nurse-educators are moderately satisfied (Chen, Beck, & Amos, 2005) and are highly satisfied (Harty, 2008) with their jobs, respectively.

On the one hand, results of the correlational analysis showed that disengagement has a negative relationship with job satisfaction, and resilience is positively-correlated to job satisfaction. These mean that the more disengaged the faculty members are, the lesser their job satisfaction; and the more resilient the nurse-educators are, the more they become satisfied with their job. These findings further proved the work of Kim, Oh, and Park (2011) that the higher nurses’ resilience was, the lower their burnout and the higher their work satisfaction.

**Study Implications**

The present study found that nurse-educators have low exhaustion but high disengagement scores. Academic administrators and faculty members should be well-educated on work engagement and how to enhance commitment to work. Strategies to further cultivate and enhance nurse-educators’ personal resilience can be achieved by developing a personality trait of hardness to buffer the effects of different adversities in the workplace.
Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

One limitation to this study is the sample size studied. Future research may consider having a national survey to further generalize the findings and to measure if there is a significant difference between geographical regions in the Philippines. The demographic information gathered in this study was only considered for description purposes. Other researchers may test the relationship between the demographic profile of nurse-educators and their job satisfaction to provide more insights in the Philippine perspective. The use of other statistical tool is also suggested, such as path analysis, to see the direct and indirect effects of exhaustion, disengagement, and resilience to job satisfaction of nursing faculty.

REFERENCES


