

Workplace Violence against Nurses: A Mini Review Paper

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Abstract

The health workers all over the world are at high risk of violence. In health care, Workplace Violence (WPV) is under-reported. This paper intends to discuss causes of violence against nurses in the workplace, and interventions that can reduce the risk of WPV. An electronic search was conducted in data bases Google Scholar and PubMed. According to past studies, there were several factors that may lead to WPV. There is a need to create laws that guarantee the provision of a suitable work environment by providing security and protection units to nurses who experienced WPV.

Keywords: Workplace Violence; Nurses; Violence

Introduction

Workplace violence is not a new phenomenon; The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) defines workplace violence as the act or threat of violence, ranging from verbal abuse to physical assaults, directed toward people at work or on duty. Workplace violence also include acts that result in damage to an organization's resources or capabilities. Workplace violence (WPV) was defined as violent events such as threats, abuse, or physical assaults that challenge the well-being of staffs in their workplace [1]. It was described as "an instance of violent treatment or procedure, this includes the use of physical force to injure, abuse, damage, or destroy". It is an intense violent action or force willfully to damage, abuse, destroy, or injure, with the possibility of causing disability or death [2].

Violence is a critical global social problem and has been a common and important issue in the medical setting, and the largest victims of violence in medical settings are nurses [3]. According to recent reports, health workers all over the world are at high risk of violence [4-14]. The WPV happens daily, and the major incidents of workplace violence were verbal abuse occurring in the care setting, then become others constitute assault, battery, domestic violence, stalking, or sexual harassment, and bullying or mobbing, racial harassment and threats of physical assault [15].

Health care WPV is an under-reported, universal, and insistent problem that has been tolerated and largely ignored [15]

Aim of the Study

This paper intends to present a review of causes of violence against nurses in the workplace, and interventions that can reduce the risk of workplace violence.

Methods

Search method

The literature electronic search using the keywords violence, workplace violence, nurse, manager nursing role and the data bases were Google Scholar and PubMed.

Several studies relevant to the aim of this review were identified. Inclusion criteria were (a) studies published in English, (b) studies published in 2015, and more, (c) discussed workplace violence against health care providers, (d) studies including factors that increase violence.

Search outcome

Searching the literature resulted in 35 titles for review. The final appraisal resulted in 15 studies, excluding studies consisting of only abstract, review studies, and irrelevant studies.

Result and Discussion

The WPV is an aggressive pestilence affecting the global scale of health care workers [4,16-25]. It is the second leading cause of death for women at work and the third leading cause of occupational injury fatality in the United States [26]. According to a cross-sectional study, about 45% of health care providers reported WPV, and the most commonly assaulted were nurses (67%), subsequently nursing assistants (18%) and physicians (12%) [27].

Several factors that may lead to WPV. The patient-related factors are previous history of violent anxiety, stress, behavior, substance abuse, medical illness, frustration, and mental illness. Other factors are environment-related; environmental stressors, involving increased waiting times and overcrowding [15].

In Gambia, the understaffing, shortage of drugs and medical supplies, security vacuum and lack of management attention to workplace violence are important factors aggravating violent occurrences at the workplace [28]. A study evaluated the factors associated with among WPV nurses in Nepal and found that nurses' age and working stations were significantly associated with WPV [29]. Recently in Iran, the researchers confirmed that gender, age, work experience, and nursing shifts are factors that played significant roles in the WPV against nurses [30]. For Chinese nurses, the most common risk factors for WPV against nurses were nurses' age, department, years of experience and direct contact with patients [31]. A Jordanian study was aimed to assess the incidence of workplace violence and the predictors of violent behavior against emergency department staff working at hospitals in Jordan. The findings revealed that overcrowding, lack of resources, staff shortages, and the absence of effective anti-violence policies as factors contributed to WPV [32].

The government plays an important role in minimizing workplace violence using different approaches such as reviewing laws that protect health care workers' rights in a workplace environment [15,33-42]. There is a need to create laws that guarantee the provision of a suitable work environment by providing security and protection units to nurses who experienced WPV [3]. Nurse managers and

administrators should be cognizant of risk factors for WPV including societal, institutional, situational, and individual factors [43]. Such efforts will improve the quality of health care [44-53]. and minimize the impact of WPV on nurses, and enhance job satisfaction [1,54-67]. Legislators may consider enacting hard punishments for violence against health care workers as a special class of offense [1].

Conclusion

Health care WPV is an under-reported, universal, and persistent problem. According to past studies, there were several factors that may lead to WPV. There is a need to create laws that guarantee the provision of a suitable work environment by providing security and protection units to nurses who experienced WPV.

Recommendations

- There is a need for health prevention programs designed to meet diverse care needs to increase nurses' awareness for WPV risk.
- There is a need to develop policies and strategies that are sensitive to local conditions and need to prevent WPV.
- There is a need to create training programs to nurses on how to deal with violent incidents and to understand violence management policies.

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