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Abstract

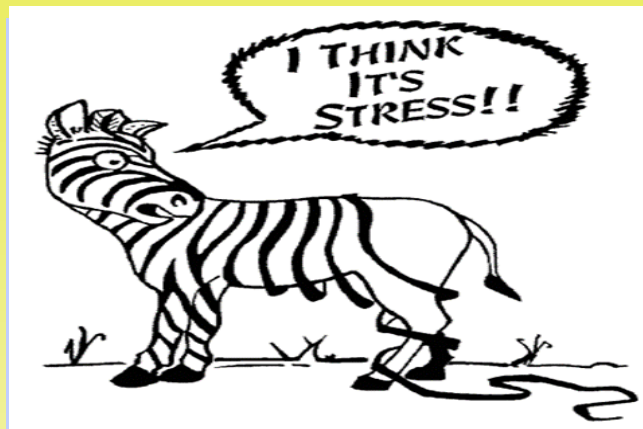
The aim of this study was to obtain views and perceptions of factors that cause stress among health care assistants in acute Dublin hospitals.

- This study was carried out as a qualitative piece of research with semi structured interviews the 5 participants interviewed were health care assistants working in acute hospital settings.
- The Data was analysed using thematic analysis and NVivo 10 software. Finding suggest that all health care assistants enjoy their work despite being exposed to poor working conditions in acute hospital settings. The research indicated that the major stressors for participant were: shortage of staff and work overload, undervalued and unfair treatment, lack of training and stress management programmes and gender inequalities and emotional labour.

Introduction

Stress in the workplace is a source of concern in modern society. This research explores factors that cause stress among health care assistants and the influence that gender inequalities holds on stress.

- The first section focuses on health care assistants and their role and duties in hospital settings. This research suggests that despite being front liners for a number of years the lack of regulatory policies to define their role makes them invisible workers in health care organisations.
- The next section emphasises on causes and effects of burnout among health care workers, it uses different models to explain organisations role in causing stress among healthcare staff. In addition uses a critical approach to assess the validity of the models in relation to stress and burnout in the workplace.



Method

This study was carried out as a qualitative piece of research the researcher believed that a qualitative approach was the most suitable method to capture people's perceptions and experiences concerning stress including accessibility to stress management services and hospital attitude towards the female dominated profession.

- A qualitative interview schedule of 18 questions was designed by the researcher to address the research question and organise the interviews.
- The data was collected with 5 semi structured interviews to allow the researcher to alter questions to suit the situation and participants' in the event unexpected information would emerge.
- The researcher believed that open questions were more suitable to access information on participants' views on stress in the workplace. In addition open questions would allow a more detailed answer and provide a wider picture on factors responsible for stress among health care assistants working in acute hospitals in Dublin.
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Results

Finding suggest that all health care assistants enjoy their work despite being exposed to poor working conditions in acute hospital settings. The research indicated that the major stressors for participant were: shortage of staff and work overload, undervalued and unfair treatment, lack of training and stress management programmes and gender inequalities and emotional labour

Discussion

In analysing health care assistants experiences of working in acute hospital settings the data collected from the research reveals that health care assistants are exposed to many factors that cause stress in the workplace.

- Poor working conditions combined with inadequate access to resources including workshops and stress management programmes are major factors that cause stress in the workplace.
- Despite all health care assistants enjoyed their work frustration and unhappiness attitude towards the hospital environment emerged.
- Shortage of staff and work overload was not only causing distress to staff it was causing distress to patients too who were experiencing prolong waiting due to lack of staff available to assist them when needed.
- Lack of training was an issue that concerned many health care assistants who felt that the absence of skills to deal with difficult situations was leaving them vulnerable to abuse and from patients and patients' relatives.

References

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