

PROFESSIONAL STRESS ON DIETICIAN WORKING IN HOSPITALS OF SOUTHERN TAMILNADU

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ABSTRACT

Professional stress refers to the harmful physical and emotional effects on the individual when job requirements do not match workers' resources or needs. Work stress can lead to poor mental and physical health. Therefore, the aim of this study was to assess the Professional stress of Dietician / nutritional professionals. In this study, the survey method was adopted using a stress scale (SS) developed by the investigator (2022). The population was fifty Dietician in Southern regions of Tamilnadu. Percentage analysis and 't' test were used for data analysis. The findings of the study revealed that the Dietician have moderate level of Professional stress. Unmarried Dietician have more stress when compared to married health care workers. There is significant difference among professional stress of Dietician of different age, educational qualification and work experience. Therefore, needs to set intervention programs focusing on prevention and control of stress is mandatory.

Keywords: Professional Stress, Dietician, Intervention Programmes

INTRODUCTION

Dietician is an expert on diet and nutrition. They belong to healthcare workers who help people achieve their health goals through nutrition and dietary changes. The working conditions inside a hospital are complex and demanding. It can create significant health and safety risks to medical and paramedical staff. The impact of poor Professional health and safety is felt not only by affected hospital employees but also by the patients they are managing. For better patient care and creating a healthy working environment, the health of hospital

employees is of prime importance. Therefore, to the authors' knowledge, this study is considered the first of its kind.

REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES

AlMuammar (2022) carried out the research topic is occupational stress in healthcare workers at a university hospital, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. the result showed that about 78% of the participants were 25–35 years old, 54% were males, and 60% were physicians. Working a shift reduced the job stress index by a statistically significant amount. However, longer working hours, higher education, and having many children contributed to higher job stress; in terms of severity, a good educational level and having many children marginally increased the risk whereas having shifts decreased the job stress. In terms of the absence of organizational support, it was discovered that having many children, a high educational level, and long working hours per day boosted it, although working a shift had a negative correlation.

Girma (2021) has studied the occupational stress and associated factors among health care professionals in Ethiopia: a systematic review and meta-analysis. the findings showed that the above half of health care professionals had Professional stress. Being female was significantly associated factor in this review and meta-analysis. Therefore, introduction of policies supporting health care professionals well-being at work in Ethiopia are advisable.

Nguyen (2018) made a study on professional stress among Health Worker in a National Dermatology Hospital in Vietnam. The result showed that doctors and nurses with Professional stress accounted for 6.4%. This proportion was higher among nurse compared to doctor (8.0% vs. 2.2%); among those with diploma literacy compared to bachelor and above (10.6% and 2.3%). This rate was also higher in health workers under 30 years old (12.9%), health workers under 5 years at work (12.1%), working night shift from 3–4 nights (33.3%), temporary employment (12.8%), heavy workload occasionally (12.5%), and working hard occasionally (17.2%) compared to those in the comparison groups with p value <0,05. This prevalence concentrated in some departments such as surgery (11.9%), internal medicine (6.7%), dermatology, and others (1.5%). The study has not found the significant association between the prevalence of Professional stress and heavy workload and skill level.

Ito (2014) studied the occupational stress among healthcare workers in Japan. the major findings were, "Total Health Risk" of the healthcare workers was 10% higher than the national average. While the physicians felt the stress of the quantitative and qualitative job overload, they had support from supervisors and coworkers and showed mild "Stress Responses". The nursing staff felt the stress of the quantitative and qualitative job overload at the same level as

the physicians, but they did not have sufficient support from supervisors and coworkers, and showed high "Stress Responses". The administrative workers did not have sufficient support from supervisors and coworkers, but they experienced less stress as measured by the quantitative and qualitative job overload than the physicians or the nursing staff and showed moderate "Stress Responses".

Based on the studies on Professional stress among health care workers, the researcher has taken this investigation. The review related to the present study gave the direction to pursuing the frame of objectives and hypotheses. Also it helped to design the study and to finalise the statistical techniques. The present study is a unique in terms of the area, sample and variables compared to the previous work done by the various researchers.

NEED OF THE STUDY

Professional stress is a global health problem which affects employed personals especially health professionals. The burden of stress is not limited at individual level, but also affects the organizations productivity, the quality of care etc. The COVID-19 pandemic has introduced additional elements of fatigue, strain, stress, loss, and grief for healthcare workers. Many healthcare workers experienced increased workload in the face of short staffing and shortages in critical personal protective equipment. This led to increasing anxiety and the risk of personal harm. Professional stress is an imbalance between requirements and ability to work. In the context of globalization and changing factors of the nature of work, the environment is increasingly pressured and unstable, people are at risk of facing increasing work stress. Considering this, the researcher has chosen this research topic.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The investigator adopted the survey method to study the Professional stress of Dietician working in the hospitals.

POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The population for the present study consists of the Dietician in the Southern region of Tamilnadu. The sample for the present study comprises fifty Dietician of Tirunelveli/Thoothukudi/Kanyakumari/Tenkasi districts in Private/Government Hospitals. The sample has been collected by using 'Simple Random Sampling Technique'.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted on the basis of following objectives.

1. To find out the level of Professional stress of Dietician with regard to personal variables.

- To find out whether there is any significant difference in the Professional stress of Dietician with regard to some selected variables such as gender, marital status, work experience and location of the hospital.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

- There is no significant difference between Professional stress of Dietician with regard to gender and marital status.
- There is no significant difference among Professional stress of Dietician in the age, educational qualification and work experience.

TOOL USED

Stress scale was developed by the Investigator (2022). It consists of 31 items and four dimensions such as work stress, patient stress, personal and psychological stress. Each item is provided with five alternatives namely always, often, sometimes, seldom and never.

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The investigator used the Mean, Standard Deviation and t-test for analysing the data. The collected data have been analysed and the results are given in the following tables.

- To find the level of Professional stress of Dietician with regard to personal variables

Table 1 Level of Professional stress of Dietician with regard to personal variables

Demographic variables	Categories	Work related stress					
		low		average		high	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Gender	Male	3	27.3	3	27.3	5	45.5
	Female	9	23.1	24	61.5	6	15.4
Work Environment	High risk	4	25.0	7	43.8	5	31.3
	Low risk	0	0.0	3	75.0	1	25.0
	Nominal	8	26.7	17	56.7	5	16.7
Work Experience	0 to 10 years	3	13.0	14	60.9	6	26.1
	11 to 20 years	9	39.1	10	43.5	4	17.4
	21 years & above	0	0.0	3	75.0	1	25.0
Type of hospital	Government	10	30.3	16	48.5	7	21.2
	Private	2	11.8	11	64.7	4	23.5

The above table shows that the Dietician have *moderate* level of Professional stress in the personal variables.

H₀ 1: There is no significant difference between Professional stress Dietician with regard to gender and marital status.

Table 2 Difference between Professional stress of Dietician with regard to gender and marital status

Personal Variables	Categories	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Calculated 't' value	Remarks
Gender	Male	11	18.55	7.917	0.509	NS
	Female	39	17.21	6.921		
Marital Status	Married	38	16.00	7.021	3.372	S
	Unmarried	12	22.25	5.065		

NS – Not significant S- Significant

From the table, there is no significant difference between male and female Dietician. But there is significant difference between the married and unmarried Dietician.

H₀ 2: There is no significant difference among Professional stress of Dietician in the age, educational qualification and work experience.

Table 3 Difference among Professional stress of Dietician in age, educational qualification and work experience

Personal Variables	Source of variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	P Value	Remarks
Age	Between	366.858	3	122.286	2.684	0.058	S
	Within	2095.642	46	45.557			
Educational qualification	Between	498.909	3	166.303	3.896	0.015	S
	Within	1963.591	46	42.687			
Work experience	Between	388.891	2	194.446	4.407	0.018	S
	Within	2073.609	47	44.119			

The above table infer that the calculated 'f' value is greater than the table value at 5% level of significance. It shows that there is significant difference among Professional stress of Dietician with regard to age, educational qualification and work experience.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Unmarried Dietician have more stress when compared to married health care workers. They may face stressful situations at their specific workplaces, but they do not find themselves compelled to perform such type of multiform roles in their lives as married women do.
2. The Dietician in the age of 21-30 years, have high level work stress compared to other ages. Due to the fact that they are may be entered in to the new job and don't know what kind of work and how to do the work, they feel overloaded with work.
3. 0-10 years' work experience of Dietician have high level work stress compared to 10-20 years and above 20 years of work experiences. At the beginning stages, youngsters may not have an idea to manage their situation. This may be the reason to have the high level of stress.

CONCLUSION

Dietician face a multitude of stressors in their work environments. Professional stress may lead to decreased job satisfaction, poor job performance, and impact overall health. Physical methods of relaxation may be helpful in reducing stress in this population. Movement-based activities such as yoga are particularly effective and may be delivered remotely. Employers in the healthcare industry should consider implementing workplace wellness programs that integrate these methods to promote the well-being of their staff. Stress management programs are critical for the reduction of workplace stress to ensure a healthy working environment for practitioners.

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