

Stress, Anxiety and Depression among Nurses in the Time of COVID-19

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Background: During the COVID-19 pandemic, healthcare system was overwhelmed leading to a great psychological pressure on nurses in the care of critically ill patients with COVID-19. Therefore, psychological well-being of nurses who provide care during the COVID-19 pandemic becomes an important issue that needs to be addressed.

Objectives: To evaluate the level of stress, anxiety, and depression among nurses working at Coronary Care Unit (CCU) of National Hospital of Sri Lanka (NHSL) during the COVID-19 pandemic

Methods: In this descriptive cross-sectional study, data were collected from the entire population as a sample (n=133) and excluded nurses who were pregnant and on leave (due to illness, maternity leave, quarantine, or lockdown) during that period. A self-administered questionnaire consisting of six sections was used to collect data on socio-demographic factors, anxiety and depression levels, work environment, interpersonal relations, and feelings related to COVID-19. Descriptive and inferential statistics, Chi-squared tests and Pearson correlation tests were used.

Results: Participants age ranged from 21 and 30 years and over half of the participants were female. Among the participants, 41.8% were undergraduates, and 59.7% held the position of Grade III nurse. Additionally, 50.7% of the participants had one to five years of working experience. Nearly half of the participants (48.9%) experienced mild anxiety, and the majority (67.7%) reported minimal or no depressive symptoms. Those who were younger and had poor knowledge on COVID-19 disease, increase the workload and fewer years of experience of nursing affected higher level of stress, anxiety or depression.

Conclusions: Providing psychological first-aid, and preventive and primitive interventions in mental well-being for nurses is important. Findings revealed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health among the participants. It reveals the presence of stress, anxiety, and depression among nurses during the pandemic and identifies age and average income as factors associated with these mental health issues.

Keywords: Anxiety, COVID-19, Depression, Mental Health, Nurses