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Research Article

**THE INFLUENCE OF EMPOWERED WORK ENVIRONMENTS
ON THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPERIENCES OF NURSING
ASSISTANTS DURING COVID-19**Bushra Rehmat¹, Shagufta Perveen², Tahira Shaheen³¹Head Nurse, Lady Willingdon Hospital Lahore²Assistant Nursing Instructor School of Nursing, District Headquarters Hospital, Vehari³Nursing instructor, Post Graduate College of Nursing Punjab, Lahore**Article Received:** November 2020**Accepted:** December 2020**Published:** January 2021**Abstract:**

COVID-19 is basically a RNA virus and the nucleic acid is about 30 kb long, positive in sense, single stranded and polyadenylated. The main objective of the study is to analyse the influence of empowered work environments on the psychological experiences of nursing assistants during COVID-19. This descriptive cross sectional study was conducted in Lady Willingdon Hospital Lahore during June 2020 to November 2020. The data was collected from hospital nursing staff for the analysis of work environment during COVID-19. The data was collected through a semi structured questionnaire and interview. The data was collected from 100 nursing staff of the hospital. The average age was 43 ± 5.90 years and most of the staff was female. All provided care to COVID-19 patients regardless of the unit that they were assigned to. The psychological experience of impact did not emerge under the information and support constructs. It is concluded that management and empowerment of NAs are critical to hospital performance and success as empowered NAs have been shown to improve their job satisfaction, performance, morale, and retention.

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INTRODUCTION:

The history of corona virus family is very old, it begins in 1965 when Tyrrell and Bynoe found that there was a virus family who damage the respiratory pathway. This virus was named as B814 in that time. It was transmitted from animals to humans. Now, in 2020 there is a virus COVID-19 which is also belongs to the family of corona virus and they infected the whole world. People all around the world facing the situation of pandemic¹.

COVID-19 is basically a RNA virus and the nucleic acid is about 30 kb long, positive in sense, single stranded and polyadenylated. The RNA which is found in this virus is the largest known RNA and codes for a large polyprotein. In addition, coronaviruses are capable of genetic recombination if 2 viruses infect the same cell at the same time².

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 is cold, flu, fever and infection in lungs. There are different stages in the attacking of this virus. At stage one and at the start patient just feel flu and temperature just like common cold and flu³. But after seven days it becomes more worse and patient feels shortness of breath and dry cough. At advanced stage the patients become also suffered from pneumonia. There is no vaccine and antiviral therapy until now⁴.

In this short communication we will talk about current situation of COVID-19 in Pakistan. It was basically starts from China from December 2019, when there was a person who died in Wuhan (a city of China) due to an unknown virus. What started as an epidemic mainly limited to China has now become a truly global pandemic. There have now been over 392,331 confirmed cases and 17,156 deaths, according the John Hopkins University Covid-19 dashboard, which collates information from national and international health authorities. The disease has been detected in more 196 countries and territories, with Italy, the US and Spain experiencing the most widespread outbreaks outside of China. There were 438,441 cases from which 19,650 died and 111,877 were recovered all around the world⁵.

The first study on social media during a pandemic dates back to the 2009 H1N1 pandemic, tracking the prevalence of misinformation (determined as 4.5%), terminology use ("H1N1" versus "swine flu"), public sentiments and fear, and relationships between case incidence and public concern⁶. Previous studies used the internet to collect data related to diseases, such as the search frequency of hand washing, hand sanitizer, and antiseptic topics⁷. The WHO declared that they are currently fighting not only an international epidemic

but also a social media infodemic, with some media claiming that the coronavirus is the first true social media infodemic because it has accelerated information and misinformation worldwide and is fueling panic and fear among people⁸. This is an unproven but testable hypothesis, because users of social media use the platforms to express their emotions, feelings, and thoughts, which can be a valuable source of data for researching mental health.

Objectives

The main objective of the study is to analyse the influence of empowered work environments on the psychological experiences of nursing assistants during COVID-19.

MATERIAL AND METHODS:

This descriptive cross sectional study was conducted in Lady Willingdon Hospital Lahore during June 2020 to November 2020. The data was collected from hospital nursing staff for the analysis of work environment during COVID-19. The data was collected through a semi structured questionnaire and interview. The research makes use of field survey methodology by obtaining views and responses of the nurses through examining the messages on Covid-19 disease. Interviews took place in a private location at the hospital at a time convenient for the nursing assistants, with no one else present. The data was collected and analysed by using Microsoft Excel 2017.

RESULTS:

The data was collected from 100 nursing staff of the hospital. The average age was 43 ± 5.90 years and most of the staff was female. All provided care to COVID-19 patients regardless of the unit that they were assigned to. The psychological experience of impact did not emerge under the information and support constructs.

Meaning

Information provided by leadership directly impacted how NAs created meaning around their work efforts. While NAs processed information delivered to them, such as knowledge and training about the care of COVID-19 patients, they found that they had to process this in the context of how it affected them. NAs discussed fear, frustration, and the need to pray.

Competence

Information delivery also influenced how competent NAs felt in doing their jobs. Information was typically shared via huddles and emails, consisting of knowledge or training related to COVID-19 patient care. Several NAs discussed feeling unprepared to do

their jobs because of the lack of adequate job knowledge and training.

Nursing Assistant duties

Nursing Assistants alone handle a number of client care tasks, including:

- Grooming and bathing
- Preparing a room with necessities like blankets and pillows
- Helping them eat and drink
- Monitoring their behaviours and moods
- Communicating with medical staff about their progress
- Assisting when they have mobility issues, including moving them in and out of wheelchairs
- Turning them to prevent bedsores or alleviate discomfort
- Helping them walk or move around

Resources

Having resources such as time, materials, money, supplies, equipment, and staff necessary to accomplish organizational goals additionally affected the meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact that NAs experienced.

DISCUSSION:

There were some preventive measures which is necessary to win this battle in Pakistan. The most important thing is to wash your hands properly for 20 seconds, use sanitizers and stay away from infected people. Use masks and gloves and do not leave the house until it becomes very necessary⁵. The army has said it will open all military hospitals and health facilities nationwide to assist in testing and treating virus cases. The most important thing is to be calm and pray for the better situation because there is a must win battle for Pakistan. As a nation it becomes our duty to protect our country, nation and ourselves. We hope for the better condition in our country as well as around the globe⁶.

With increasing cases of immensely contagious COVID-19, Pakistan's economy is under great deterioration. The terror of fatal disease and economic distress have come up together. The country cannot bear extended lockdown and should the lockdown extend, Pakistan will suffer unmanageable economic loss. Pakistan does not have any sufficient resources to provide for the patients at the moment⁷. Most of the populace is working on daily wages. The shutdown of the whole country would cause death either due to hunger or from COVID-19. The current statement of Pakistan's prime minister calls for a community meeting among susceptible countries that are dealing

with the pandemic. It has been decided that rather than complete shutdown, people should avoid mass gatherings, and partial shutting down of the country will take place in order for the economy to provide for basic necessities⁸.

One could argue that the panic caused by widespread information about COVID-19 in the Pakistan is worse than the number of COVID-19 cases and will have a longer-lasting effect⁹. It is important to communicate this to health professionals in the region and for media experts to work with these professionals to ensure that only well-vetted information is disseminated to the public. It is also important to engage the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education in this effort to be prepared for future epidemics or health situations¹⁰. Considering the current pandemic, more support staff may be needed to protect NAs from burnout and relieve understaffed nurses of routine healthcare tasks. It is additionally important to provide support across the board. Incentives, increased pay, ladder opportunities have been recommended for enhancing the role of the NA, but it is important that we do not forget that NAs want to be seen, heard, and valued from the top down as discussed in this study¹¹.

CONCLUSION:

It is concluded that management and empowerment of NAs are critical to hospital performance and success as empowered NAs have been shown to improve their job satisfaction, performance, morale, and retention.

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