

STRESS AND BURNOUT AMONG NURSING TEACHERS IN TAIWAN

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Nursing teacher, Stress, Burnout

In Taiwan and elsewhere in the world, nursing teachers not only encounter stressors that faced by teachers in other disciplines, they also feel intense social pressure to be good role models for the rest of society. Nursing research has yet to investigate the emotional toll of these educators.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to investigate the intensity of stress and burnout among nursing teachers.

Method: This study analyzes data from a 2002 study conducted in Taiwan. The participants were 253 nursing teachers, most of whom were younger than 40 years ($M=35.97$, $SD=6.17$) and married (63.1%). The majority (75.8%) had master's degrees or higher and were lecturers (73.1%) in vocational colleges (49.0%) or technological institutes (34.4%). Most (82.6%) gave instruction in clinical work, and 68.4% were involved in administrative work. The Occupational Stress and Coping scale (the Occupational Stress Index in the Chinese version) was used to measure the degree of stress and coping experienced by the participants. The Cronbach α for the stress subscale used in this study was .95. The instrument for burnout was the Maslach Burnout Inventory as modified by the researchers (Cronbach $\alpha = .92$). Descriptive statistics, t-test, and ANOVA were used to answer the research questions.

Findings: The results showed that nursing teachers experienced high stress ($M=4.03$, $SD=.79$, range 1 to 6), but not any high degree of burnout ($M=2.68$, $SD=.49$, range 1 to 6). About 49.2% wanted to leave their current jobs, while 45.1% chose to stay. The stress level of the teachers did not significantly differ across various education levels ($p>.05$) or job titles ($p>.05$); however, it was different across intentions to leave or stay on the job ($p<.05$). There were significant differences in burnout status according to the teachers' education ($p<.05$), intention to leave or stay on the job ($p<.01$), and job title ($p<.01$). Teachers who were teaching assistants or who had bachelor's degrees or less had higher burnout scores than the other groups ($p<.05$). There was a significantly positive relationship between burnout and stress ($r=.30$).

Discussion: The findings from the study suggest that nursing teachers, especially those who are teaching assistants or those with less than a master's level education, need to learn and adopt various strategies for coping with high stress and burnout. In addition, the study recommends that nursing schools appraise their teaching environments, including workloads and facilities, and incorporate appropriate measures to reduce stress among nursing teachers and promote their health.