

Work Stress and General Well-Being among Faculty Members of Selected Nursing Colleges in Kozhikode during Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

A study was conducted to assess the correlation between work stress and general well-being among faculty members of selected nursing colleges at Kozhikode (Kerala) during Covid-19 pandemic. The study sought to find out the level of work stress among faculty members, to determine the state of general well-being among faculty members and to test the relationship between work stress and general well-being of faculty members. Quantitative approach with descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. One hundred samples were selected using non-probability convenience sampling. Tools used in the study were questionnaire to assess socio-personal data, the standardised HSE Management Standards Indicator Tool to assess work stress and the standardised General Well-Being Survey. Data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Results showed that 55 percent of the sample had mild work stress, 34 percent had no work stress, 10 percent had moderate work stress and only 1 percent had severe work stress. General well-being was identified as good for 49 percent of the faculty, moderate for 42 percent and poor for only 9 percent of the faculty. A significant positive correlation exists between work stress and general well-being of faculty members, $r = 0.7391$ ($p = 0.01$).

Key words: Work stress, Well-being, Nursing faculty

Covid-19 pandemic has brought into focus the mental health of various affected populations. It is known that the prevalence of such infectious diseases creates new stressors including fear and worry for oneself or loved ones, constraints on physical movement and social activities due to quarantine and sudden and radical lifestyle changes (Prasad & Vaidya, 2020). Well-being is the function of health, happiness, and prosperity. It includes having good mental health, high life satisfaction, a sense of meaning or purpose, and ability to manage stress. Well-being generally includes global judgements of life satisfaction and feelings ranging from depression to joy (Lisa et al, 2017). The global Covid-19 pandemic forced many organisations who never had experience with employees working from home to move quickly to develop or expand remote working arrangements even for employees who otherwise would not have had this flexibility

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(Sherrill et al, 2020). Widespread outbreaks of infectious diseases such as Covid-19 can lead to physical illness as well as psychological distress and mental illness. Work-related stress is an unpleasant reaction that people may suffer due to pressures and demands placed on them at work. Work stressors can be different, depending on the characteristics of the work place or may be unique to an organisation. The recent increase in work stress has been connected with job insecurity and work intensity that may lead to greater workloads and more interpersonal conflicts, and can have an adverse effect on children's mental health through disrupted parenting (Changwon et al, 2020).

Covid-19 pandemic led teachers to an unpredictable scenario where the lockdown has accelerated the shift from traditional to online educational method. Relationships altered by avoiding direct contact with the others, with implications for their mental health. Faculty members constitute the core asset of every academic institution, taking on the primary tasks of teaching, research, and service activities that contribute to the academic activities of the institution. Moreover, they

mentor the next generation of scholars who allow the institution to thrive (Christian et al, 2020).

Literature Review

An online survey explored the physical, social, psychological, and financial effects of work-from-home system during the lockdown, on 165 working professionals of different age groups drawn from across the country, predominantly South India. The study found that work was more “stressful and lethargic” than working from office for most persons. Nearly 87 per cent of the respondents felt that companies must evolve clear work-from-home policies with focus on the well-being of employees and their motivation. Nearly 49 percent of the respondents were experiencing work-from-home for the first time in their career. Extended working hours was a major grievance, with 55.2 percent claiming to have worked for more than their usual office hours and 91 percent among them complained of doing so without receiving due incentives. About 59 percent complained of increased workload. Participants also complained of difficulties in getting leave unlike during normal time as companies questioned the need for leaves when they were already at home. About 33.3 percent claimed that they were denied leave. Health concerns marked the work-from-home arrangement for most employees with 38.2 percent complaining of frequent headaches, 56.40 percent of back pain and nearly 52 percent of sleep disorders. While 54 percent noticed considerable decrease in their ‘me time’, 41.80 percent said they spent quality time with their families. About 63 percent reported a spike in their personal expenses due to a surge in electricity and internet charges, which went hand-in-hand with pay cut suffered by 30.30 percent (Praveen, 2020).

A study was conducted to understand the relationships among stress, work-related burnout, and remote working brought on by social distancing efforts and stay at home orders during the Covid-19 pandemic. Results of the study suggested that perceived stress did increase during the Covid-19 restrictions, especially for people that had limited experience working from home; more affected were the female. Individuals who worked from home before Covid-19 had higher levels of work-related burnout but did not differ based on gender or part-time work status (Sherrill et al, 2020).

From the above literature review it is clear that work from home culture during Covid-19 lockdown days was indeed stressful for most of the professionals. Some studies suggest having better quality time with family during the same period. So, the investigators of this study felt it would be useful to assess the amount of work stress experienced by another professional group

that being faculty members during Covid-19 and whether their stress had any relation to their general well-being during the time. It was endeavoured to find out the correlation between work stress and well-being among faculty members of selected nursing colleges.

Objectives

1. To identify the level of work stress among faculty members during Covid-19 pandemic.
2. To determine the state of general well-being among faculty members during Covid-19 pandemic.
3. To test the relationship between work stress and general well-being of faculty members during Covid-19 pandemic.

Hypothesis

H1: there is a significant relationship between work stress and general well-being of faculty members during Covid-19 pandemic at 0.05 level of significance.

Material and Methods

The research approach used for the study was quantitative descriptive survey type as it was found to be appropriate to assess work stress and general well-being among faculty members of selected nursing colleges in Kozhikode (Kerala) during Covid-19 pandemic.

Ethical consideration: The proposal for the study was approved by the Institutional Ethics Committee of Baby Memorial Hospital, Kozhikode. The ethical aspect of the research was maintained throughout the data collection. After a pilot study with 10 samples, the main study was conducted with 100 faculty members from various nursing colleges. Sample was collected using non-probability convenience sampling based on the inclusion criteria. A structured questionnaire was used to collect socio-personal data, the standardised HSE Management Standards Indicator Tool was used to assess work stress and the standardised General Well-Being Survey was used to assess general well-being among faculty members. The research variables were work stress and general well-being. The demographic variables were: age in completed years, gender, type of family, marital status, number of children, professional qualification, work designation, work experience as faculty, experience with work-from-home before Covid-19 pandemic, having family member involved with work-from-home, having children attending online classes from home, availability of necessary resources or technical support (laptop, net coverage, range etc.) for work from home, receipt of any compensation for the utilisation of

Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of subjects according to their level of work stress (n = 100)

Level of work stress	Score range	Frequency	Percentage
Severe	35 – 70	1	1
Moderate	71 – 105	10	10
Mild	106 – 140	55	55
No stress	141 – 175	34	34

Table 2: Frequency and percentage distribution of subjects according to their state of general well-being (n=100)

State of general well-being	Score range	Frequency	Percentage
Poor	10 – 16	9	9
Moderate	17 – 23	42	42
Good	24 – 30	49	49

resources (electricity, mobile recharge etc.) during work from home and cut/ reduction in usual salary pay scale during work-from-home period. The validity of the tools was established through content validity by experts in the field of nursing education. The reliability of the tools was established through split half reliability using Karl Pearson's Correlation Coefficient with value of 0.641 for the HSE Management Standards Indicator Tool and value of 0.722 for the General Well-Being Survey in the current setting.

Formal permission from institutional authorities and informed consent from participants was obtained. The researchers contacted faculty members via phone and google forms of the tools were shared through WhatsApp. The data received from the received google form responses was subjected to both descriptive and inferential statistical analysis. The ethical aspect of the research was maintained throughout the data collection. The methodological limitation of the study is that the authenticity of the data provided by respondents through google forms cannot be established completely.

Results

Table 1 shows that majority of the sample had mild work stress (55%) and only one sample had severe work stress (1%).

Table 2 reveals that while most of the samples experienced good general well-being (49%);

Table 3: Relationship between work stress and general well-being of faculty (n=100)

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation	Karl Pearson's 'r'	'p' value	Inference
Work stress	128.39	20.70	0.7391	0.01*	S
General well-being	23.06	4.64			

*Significant at 0.05 level

about 42 of them experienced moderate general well-being (42%) whereas only nine samples (9%) experienced poor general well-being.

Table 3 indicates that a significant positive correlation exists between work stress and general well-being of faculty members ($r=0.7391$, $p=0.01$).

Discussion

In the present study, 55 percent of the sample had mild work stress, 34 percent had no work stress, 10 percent had moderate work stress and only 1 percent had severe work stress. The study results are consistent with the results of the study by Jakubowski & Sitko-Dominik (2021). This study was conducted to investigate the relation between distance education and teachers' well-being, and their close relations and other social relations during the first two waves of the Covid-19 pandemic among 285 Polish primary and secondary school teachers. The study found that the teachers experienced at least mild levels of stress, anxiety and depression, both during the first as well as the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic in Poland (Jakubowski & Sitko-Dominik, 2022). Contrasting results were found in a study by Natalia & Laura (2022) conducted a study to identify the stress and burnout in 9,058 Argentine teachers during times of pandemic. The study results revealed that more than 60 percent of the educators reported high and moderately high levels of stress. Another study by Kotowski et al (2022) to determine whether Covid-19 continued to impact teacher stress, burnout, and well-being a year into the pandemic among 5,300 teachers in public and private schools showed that stress and burnout continued to be high for teachers, with 72 percent of teachers feeling very or extremely stressed, and 57 percent feeling very or extremely burned out.

The present study identified that general well-being was good for 49 percent of the faculty, moderate for 42 percent and poor for only 9 percent of the faculty. The study results are consistent with results of a study by Alves et al (2021) who analysed factors related to the professional well-being of Portuguese teachers during the Covid-19 pandemic. The results showed that the majority of respondents had a moderately positive perception of well-being. Teachers were satisfied with the education system before the pandemic. The pandemic had reduced the perception of well-being in the face of the profession, creating some concern among teachers about their professional future. Yet another study by Hascher et al (2022) to assess 21 Swiss primary

teachers' professional well-being during school closure due to the Covid-19 pandemic found that medium to high levels of teacher well-being could accompany a general negative evaluation of the move to distance teaching. Contrasting results were found in a study conducted by Shen & Paul (2021) to investigate the current status of occupational stress, coping styles, mental health and emotional well-being of 87 university academic staff during the Covid-19 outbreak in Northern Ireland. The results showed academics experienced moderate stress levels and had poor emotional well-being.

The present study found a significant positive correlation between work stress and general well-being of faculty members ($r = 0.7391$; $p = 0.01$). Consistent results were found in a study by Ganga & Anis (2021) which was conducted to assess the relationship between occupational stress and psychological well-being among +2 senior secondary school teachers of Madhubani district of Bihar. The study results showed that occupational stress and psychological well-being were negatively correlated with each other.

Recommendations

- The study can be replicated on a larger sample to generalise the findings.
- A comparative study may be conducted to assess (a) the work stress among faculty and nursing staff and (b) general well-being across members of different professions.
- Different sampling techniques can be used to confirm the validity of the findings.

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Conclusion

This study found that most of the faculty members had mild work stress. General well-being was good for most of the faculty members. It was also found that a significant positive correlation exists between work stress and general well-being of faculty members.

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