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ANNOUNCEMENT

Florida International University
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Doctoral Dissertation Defense

Abstract

A Mixed Methods Approach to Exploring Nurses’ COVID-19 Experiences and Identifying Effective Coping Strategies for Common Nurse Strains

by

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Given the substantial range of stressors exacerbated by COVID-19 and their detrimental effects on healthcare workers, researchers have called for a more thorough investigation into how COVID-19 has impacted the health and well-being of healthcare workers. With nurses working on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a sense of urgency to empirically gather information on these experiences, particularly for those working in epicenters of the outbreak. The primary goal of this collected papers dissertation is to help inform organizational policies and practices in the healthcare industry related to nurses’ health and well-being. As such, this dissertation utilized a mixed-method design to 1) document and describe South Florida nurses’ lived experiences of working during the COVID-19 pandemic and 2) identify effective coping strategies for STS, burnout, and compassion fatigue, strains that nurses are especially vulnerable to and may be exacerbated by the challenges associated with the current pandemic.

The first study in this dissertation used a qualitative design and thematic analysis to identify seven themes associated with understanding nurses’ COVID-19-related workplace experiences: challenges related to working conditions, changes to quality of patient care, the impact of COVID-19 on physical and mental health, the nursing shortage, post-traumatic growth, leveraging personal resources to cope with workplace experiences, and strategies for retaining the nurse workforce and preparing for future health crises.

The second study in this dissertation used meta-analytical techniques to identify coping strategies with the strongest empirical support for reducing three strain outcomes (STS, burnout, and compassion fatigue) and found that social support had the strongest empirical support for reducing burnout, while self-care had the strongest empirical support for reducing compassion fatigue. Due to the limited number of studies and exclusion criteria, STS was not meta-analyzed. Findings from both studies have important implications for how healthcare organizations create healthy workplaces for nurses and facilitate employee well-being.

Date: 3/28/22
Time: 3:30 – 5:30 pm
Place: DM 256

Department: Psychology
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