



**A STUDY TO EXPLORE THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF FRONT-LINE
NURSES DURING COVID- 19 PANDEMIC IN SELECTED HOSPITAL AT
RAJASTHAN**

Prateek Sharma

Ph.D. Scholar

INTRODUCTION

Nurses are the forefront of promoting health, advocating for patients and advancing the science of care. The World Health Organization (WHO) designated the year 2020 as the year of the Nurse and Midwife and planned to celebrate nurses worldwide, to address challenges nurses face and to highlight nurse's vast contributions throughout 2020. The year of the Nurse and Midwife was quickly overshadowed by the international invasion of the novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). The effects of COVID-19 have been felt in, and continue to ripple through, all areas of the world. Anecdotes continue to emerge as nurses engage in the power of storytelling to share their individual reality of COVID-19. Curating and archiving these pandemic experiences are important and necessary. COVID-19 (caused by the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) Corona Virus-2 (CoV 2) and known as the novel Coronavirus) is an infectious disease which has been recently declared as a pandemic by the WHO. COVID-19 spreads rapidly and often through proximity to the cases and carriers, and there is no vaccine or treatment available to date. As a result, public health scientists across most affected countries worldwide have identified "social distancing," "self-isolation at home," and "frequent hand washing" as the strongly recommended measures to contain the spread of the disease. A substantial burden of the clinical treatment and public prevention efforts in hospitals and community settings is on the Health-Care Workers (HCWs). A HCW is one who delivers care and services to the sick and ailing either directly or indirectly. HCWs are at increased risk of being infected because they are at the front line. They have to commute and care for suspected/confirmed cases of COVID-19 for several hours with

proximity. This responsibility has its mental health consequences. It is also anxiety provoking for HCWs when they see their colleagues become patients, which can be physically and mentally draining. Some HCWs, unfortunately experience avoidance by their family members and community due to the stigma or fear. The impact of the pandemic on the nursing and midwifery workforce has been unprecedented and will be felt for a long time to come. The crisis has also laid bare and exacerbated longstanding problems faced by nurses and midwives, including inequalities, inadequate working conditions and chronic excessive work pressures. COVID-19 is considered the cause of a dangerous illness that affects people's lives and, in many cases, threatens the lives of infected people. In addition, this virus presents an immediate danger to the functioning of communities across the world. Such impacts include the loss of jobs and its effects on families, changes in the mode of education because attendance and interaction have shifted to online and distance learning, and many other changes in people's lives. Despite these facts, in many countries, disease mitigation, preparedness and responses were implemented; however, these measures for coping with the events of COVID-19 were insufficient. The affected countries called for help when COVID 19 massively harmed healthcare systems and hospitals and, in many countries, consumed their medical resources. It was found that the detection of COVID-19 cases was not identical across countries, as in some countries the number of infected cases was large and rapidly increased, and sudden critical care was necessary in countries such as Italy. However, in some countries, the number of cases either remained steady or fluctuated, which is expected in biological disasters.

OBJECTIVE

- To explore the lived experiences of front-line nurses during COVID-19 pandemic

Research Methodology

Qualitative research is a process of naturalistic inquiry that seeks an in-depth understanding of social phenomena within their natural setting. In this research the samples were from Shree Kalyan Arogya Sadan Bajaj Gram Sanwali, Sikar, Rajasthan, as it was a tertiary care center for COVID-19 and also the health care workers in the same institution have more experiences in pandemic. Sample consisted of front-line nurses who have taken care of COVID-19 patients at Shree Kalyan Arogya Sadan Bajaj Gram

Sanwali, Sikar, Rajasthan and the sampling technique used was purposive sampling. The sample size was 90 nurses who fulfilled the inclusion criteria. The reliability of the tool was assessed using test-retest method by using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Result

Section I : Description of participant characteristics In this study the participants characteristics includes age in years, gender, educational status, clinical experience (number of years), number of rotations of COVID duty taken, area of taking COVID duty, attendance to CNE on COVID-19, marital status, number of children, type of family and presence of vulnerable persons in the family. Section II : Qualitative analysis of the lived experiences of frontline nurses This section deals with the brief description of the sub themes, themes and phenomena derived from the qualitative analysis of the lived experiences of frontline nurses using Colaizzi's seven step method. The data were analysed following the steps of analysis of qualitative study. Six themes were derived from the verbatim of the participants and 12 sub themes were identified. The phenomenon derived from these themes and subthemes described the lived experience of frontline nurses during COVID-19 pandemic.

Discussion

In the present study four participants belonged to the age group of 36-40 years and majority of them were females. A mixed method study on willingness and psychological preparedness among healthcare workers to attend to COVID-19 patients in a Shree Kalyan Arogya Sadan Bajaj Gram Sanwali, Sikar, Rajasthan revealed that among demographic factors increasing age and female gender were the key factors in determining willingness and positive emotional response. In present study five participants were qualified with GNM and three of the participants have 11-15 years of clinical experience. Findings showed that three participants are included in both the groups who have taken 10-15 and 26-30 rotations of COVID duty and majority of the participants were taken COVID duty in all the areas including triage, ICU and ward. Majority of the participants are belongs to nuclear family and 66.66% of the participants have vulnerable persons in their family. A study conducted on predictors of psychological impact among the healthcare workers exposed to covid-19 cases in a tertiary hospital of Bangladesh showed that among the 390 respondents, 21.6%, 43.1%

and 24.1% had depression, anxiety and stress symptoms, respectively. In respect of anxiety, being graduate and higher secondary qualified, staying in family accommodation, with nuclear family, smoker, doctor, having service length performing overtime duty were significantly associated with anxiety symptoms. Being graduate, with nuclear family type, having duty place at emergency, being a nurse, having service length < 10 years and performing overtime duty were significantly associated with stress symptoms.

Conclusion

The following conclusions were made on the basis of findings of the study:

- Frontline nurses had faced lots of difficulties in terms of physical, professional, emotional and personal aspects
- All the health workers were stand together to fight with the COVID
- Even they had lots of struggles, the dignity they got by working in a pandemic made them gratified and they also expressed their willingness to work in similar situations in future
- Implementing measures to reduce the impact of workload and psychological distress and providing support will help them to feel satisfied