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Influence of work-related stress of nurses on their child-rearing and feeding practices: A descriptive study in Kandy District

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Background: Nursing is a stressful health profession and occupation related stress among nurses effect their professional and personal life.

Objective: This descriptive study aims to evaluate the influence of work-related stress intensity of nurses on their child-rearing and feeding attributes.

Method: Nurses (27-41 years old) who have children age between six months to five years and work in three main hospitals in Kandy District participated. The sample size (n=84) calculated by G power software, and conveniently selected nurses were recruited to the study. A newly developed, pre-tested, self-administered five point Likert type questionnaire was used to collect data and analyzed by using SPSS version 21. Correlations were significant at $p < 0.01$ in the Pearson correlation test.

Results: Workload, responsibilities, inadequate facilities and staff, missing parental responsibilities, and administrative problems were most prominent causes for nurses' stress during shifts while, conflicts with others, lack of support from others, and seing death and suffering made them stress less likely. The stress levels were categorized into three, named mild (0-16), moderate (17-32), and severe (33-48) according to their score on stress questionnaire. Results revealed 76.2% of nurses suffered from moderate stress while 22.6% and 1.2% of them were struggling with mild and severe stress, respectively. Significantly, the authoritarian child rearing and forceful feeding attributes showed positive correlation to the stress level. In contrast, the authoritative parenting attributes negatively correlated with their occupation related stress. The authoritarian parental attributes showed association with force-feed characteristics, and authoritative parental attributes were accompanied with modelling feeding features positively.

Conclusion: Nurses are experiencing stress due to a multitude of causes. With the stress intensity they tend to be more authoritarian and forced feed rather than encouraging independency (authoritative) towards both child rearing and feeding practices.