

Stressors And Coping Strategies of Emergency Nurses in Selected Hospitals in Rizal

Gellica Anne N. Naval¹, Dr. Joel John Dela Merced²

<https://orcid.org/0009-0007-6871-2847>¹, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1459-5274>²

St. Bernadette of Lourdes College^{1,2}

gnaval@sbllc.edu.ph¹, jdelamerced@sbllc.edu.ph²

ABSTRACT

Emergency nurses face many challenges in their daily work that can affect their well-being and the quality of patient care. This study aimed to determine the stressors and coping strategies of emergency nurses in selected hospitals in Rizal. It also examined the relationship between stressors and coping strategies and identified significant differences across the nurses' demographic profiles. Emergency nurses experienced both internal and external stressors, with external stressors, such as staffing shortages and heavy workload, being more common. Emotion-focused coping strategies were the most frequently used, while avoidance coping was the least used. Significant differences in stressors and coping strategies were found based on age, years of emergency nursing experience, and work shift. A significant relationship was also found between workplace stressors and coping strategies. The study concludes that workplace stress remains a major concern among emergency nurses. It recommends that hospital administrators strengthen staffing, provide stress management programs, and promote a supportive work environment to help nurses manage stress effectively and improve the quality of patient care.

Keywords: *Emergency nurses, stressors, coping strategies, workplace stress, hospitals*

INTRODUCTION

The department in healthcare that has the highest pressure and is most demanding is probably the Emergency Department. This department is where medical professionals, especially nurses, manage various patient conditions while simultaneously making life-and-death decisions. Occupational stress among emergency nurses is increasingly high globally. Healthcare professional shortages are high and prevalent in most countries in Asia, particularly in the Philippines. The unbalanced nurse-to-patient ratios add pressure, reduce nurses' job satisfaction, increase the risk of burnout, and therefore compromise the care patients receive.

Statement of the Problem

The goal of this study was to identify the stressors and coping strategies used by Emergency nurses in Selected Private Hospitals in Rizal. Specifically, it sought to address the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the nurse respondents in terms of:

- Age
- Gender
- Marital status
- Months/Years of nursing experience in the Emergency room

- Nurse-to-patient ratio
 - Patient acuity level
 - Type of work shift
2. What is the perceived intensity of stressors experienced by Emergency nurses?
 - 2.1 Internal stressors
 - 2.2 External stressors
 3. What are the most frequently utilized coping strategies by Emergency nurses?
 4. Is there a significant difference in the perceived intensity of stressors when grouped according to profile?
 5. Is there a significant difference in the frequently utilized coping strategies when grouped according to profile?
 6. Is there a significant correlation between the intensity of stressors and the frequently utilized coping strategies by nurses?
 7. What are the challenges affecting the Emergency nurses?
 8. What framework can be developed to reduce the Emergency nurses' stressors and improve their coping strategies?

Scope and Delimitations

The focus of this study is to assess the intensity of stressors and their perceived prevalence in selected private hospitals in Rizal, as experienced by registered nurses deployed in the Emergency Department. The study is limited to Emergency nurses working in selected hospitals in Rizal. Hospitals from other regions or countries were not included due to variations in cultural context and healthcare systems, as well as specific hospital policies.

Review of Related Literature

Across the reviewed studies, a consistent pattern shows that nurses who are working in the Emergency Department experience significant stress due to both external factors such as heavy workload, high nurse-to-patient ratios, staffing shortages, patient demands, and limited resources and internal factors such as fear, anxiety, self-expectations, and emotional burden, with the findings from Dantis et al. (2024), Robat (2021), and multiple BMC Nursing publications all identifying workload and workplace dynamics as major contributors to burnout, fatigue, and decreased performance; while studies on staffing from Manimala et al., Chen et al., Alibudbud, 2024 evidently show that inadequate nurse-to-patient ratios worsen stress and compromise patient safety, while fatigue-related research (Alameri et al., Celik et al., Zhang et al.) agrees that poor sleep and prolonged work hours impair cognitive function and increase the risk for medical errors, reinforcing the systemic nature of these issues, yet differences are evident in contextual focus. Some studies emphasize pandemic-related stressors such as infection risk and PPE shortages, while others highlight socioeconomic influences (Zhong, 2025) or task-specific demands (Kang & Jin, 2024), and differences in reported burnout prevalence (e.g., Ghasemi Kooktapeh et al., 2023) suggest inconsistencies in measurement or setting; Although many studies identify coping strategies like social support, mindfulness, and brief rest periods, a key gap remains in the lack of integrated approaches that combine individual coping mechanisms with organizational and policy-level interventions, particularly within the Philippine context, indicating the need for more comprehensive research

linking personal and systemic strategies to improve nurse well-being and patient outcomes.

Theoretical Framework

Neuman Systems Model explains that a person is an open system that is constantly affected by internal and external stressors. Nurses help prevent or reduce the effects of these stressors to maintain or restore the person's stability and wellness.

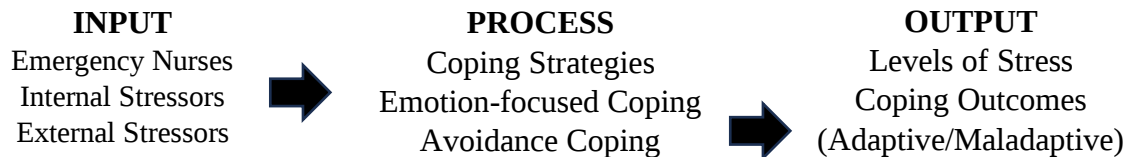
Behavioral System Model views a person as a behavioral system made up of different subsystems that work together to maintain balance. Nurses promote health by helping restore balance when a person's behavior is disrupted by illness or stress.

Roy Adaptation Model states that people continuously adapt to changes in their environment through coping processes. Nurses support patients in developing effective responses so they can adapt successfully and achieve better health.

Conceptual Framework

Stressors and Coping Strategies of Emergency Nurses shows that emergency nurses are the central population who experience internal and external stressors, which disrupt behavioral systems and challenges their stability. To manage this imbalance, nurses employ coping strategies that influence stress outcomes and performance.

METHODOLOGY



This Quantitative research study examined the stressors and coping strategies of Emergency nurses in Selected Hospitals in Rizal.

Research Design

This study applied the Descriptive, Quantitative, Correlational, cross-sectional research design with triangulation. The research utilized a structured tool such as questionnaires and rating scales. The data gathered will be analyzed using statistics and the results will be presented in numbers, percentages, means, correlations. After the collection of the Descriptive quantitative data, the study will also utilize Correlational design.

Research Steps

St. Bernadette of Lourdes College Research Ethics Committee received a formal research proposal submitted by the researcher. The researcher ensured that ethical and administrative approvals were secured prior to any data collection. Upon the approval from the Directors and Chief Nurses in the private hospitals in Rizal, data collection proceeds. Informed

consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation letters were all accomplished prior to data collection. They were informed that the study served as a basis for the institutions to assess their ER staff nurses' stressors and coping strategies and develop framework and interventions. Only the researcher, thesis adviser, and panel experts have the authority to access the information and data gathered.

Data Collection and Sample Selection

Data were collected using a validated self-made questionnaire distributed to emergency nurses from selected hospitals in Rizal. Total population sampling was used, and only eligible nurses who met the inclusion criteria and voluntarily consented to participate were included in the study.

Data Analysis Methods

The collected data were analyzed using appropriate descriptive and inferential statistical methods to determine the respondents' profile, level of stressors, coping strategies, and significant differences among variables. The findings were presented in tables and interpreted based on the objectives of the study.

Research Hypotheses and Validation

The study does not have null hypothesis since the research used total population sampling. The research instrument was validated by three matter experts, a chief nurse, an ER preceptor, and research consultant. The statistical analysis was reviewed and validated by a statistician before the study was finalized. Reliability test was done after the pilot testing and using Cronbach's alpha to test the reliability of the test questionnaire.

Study Limitations and Ethical Considerations

The study was limited to emergency nurses from selected hospitals in Rizal; therefore, the findings may not be generalizable to nurses in other hospitals or regions. In addition, the study relied on self-reported questionnaire responses, which may have been influenced by the respondents' honesty, perceptions, and recall. The study obtained voluntary informed consent from all participants before data collection. Participants' identities and responses were kept confidential and anonymous, participation was voluntary, and all collected data were securely stored and handled in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study found that emergency nurses experienced both internal and external workplace stressors, with workload, time pressure, staffing shortages, and emotionally demanding situations being among the most common. Nurses primarily used emotion-focused coping strategies to manage these stressors, while avoidance coping was used less frequently. The findings suggest that effective coping strategies help nurses manage workplace stress despite the demanding emergency department environment. These results emphasize the importance of organizational support and stress management programs in improving nurses' well-being and the quality of patient care.

SUMMARY

This study examined the stressors and coping strategies of emergency nurses working in selected hospitals in Rizal using a quantitative descriptive research design. Data were gathered through a validated questionnaire administered to eligible emergency nurses selected through total population sampling. The findings showed that emergency nurses experienced moderate to high levels of workplace stress and commonly relied on emotion-focused coping strategies. The study highlighted the need for supportive workplace interventions to reduce stress and improve nurses' well-being.

CONCLUSIONS

- Emergency nurses experienced significant workplace stress due to the demanding nature of emergency care. Despite these challenges, they demonstrated adaptive coping strategies that enabled them to continue providing quality patient care. The study concluded that both individual coping mechanisms and organizational support play important roles in reducing occupational stress. Strengthening workplace resources and stress management programs may further improve nurses' well-being and job performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Hospitals should strengthen stress management programs, provide adequate staffing, and promote a supportive work environment for emergency nurses. Nursing administrators should encourage regular mental health activities, debriefing sessions, and continuing professional development related to stress management.

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AI DECLARATION STATEMENT

AI-supported tools helped with grammar and structure in creating this article. No AI tools were used to collect, analyze, or interpret data; all authors are credited for their academic contributions.

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