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## **Education system and exposure to stress and the sense of satisfaction of nursing students**

System kształcenia a narażenie na stres i poczucie satysfakcji studentów pielęgniarstwa

**Anna Lewandowska<sup>1</sup>, Tomasz Lewandowski<sup>2</sup>, Barbara Laskowska<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>**Institute of Healthcare, State School of Technology and Economics in Jarosław, address: Czarnieckiego Street 16, 37-500 Jarosław**

<sup>2</sup>**Institute of Technical Engineering State School of Technology and Economics in Jarosław, address: Czarnieckiego Street 16, 37-500 Jarosław**

<sup>1</sup>Instytut Ochrony Zdrowia, Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Techniczno-Ekonomiczna w Jarosławiu, ul. Czarnieckiego 16, 37-500 Jarosław

<sup>2</sup>Instytut Inżynierii Technicznej Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Techniczno-Ekonomiczna w Jarosławiu, ul. Czarnieckiego 16, 37-500 Jarosław

### **Contact address:**

dr n. med. Anna Lewandowska

ul. Czarnieckiego 16, 37-500 Jarosław

phone: 698757926; e-mail: am.lewandowska@poczta.fm

## Streszczenie

**Wprowadzenie:** Zjawisko stresu zawodowego bardzo często można spotkać już podczas procesu kształcenia wśród studentów pielęgniarstwa. Bardzo duża liczba godzin nauki praktycznej, kontakt z rzeczywistym środowiskiem leczenia, stanowi takie same zagrożenia jak w przypadku osób będących już w zawodzie. Stres, który może mieć wymiar chroniczny, stwarza ryzyko braku satysfakcji z podjętej decyzji oraz błędów medycznych popełnianych przez studentów. Satysfakcja z podjętej decyzji o wykonywanym zawodzie jest czynnikiem wielowymiarowym, obejmującym wartości psychospołeczne związane z pracą.

**Cel pracy:** Celem pracy jest ocena poziomu stresu wśród studentów pielęgniarstwa podczas procesu kształcenia praktycznego oraz analiza poziomu satysfakcji z podjętego wyboru zawodowego.

**Materiał i metoda:** Badaniem objęto 200 osób będących studentami kierunku pielęgniarstwo, kończących trzyletni okres edukacji. Dobór respondentów był losowy. Badaną grupę stanowiło 100% kobiet w wieku 23-45 lat, zamieszkujących tereny miejskie (48%) oraz wiejskie (52%).

**Metoda badawcza:** Metodą badawczą wykorzystaną w pracy był sondaż diagnostyczny. Użyte narzędzie badawcze to kwestionariusz ankiety własnej.

**Wyniki:** Podjęcie kształcenia na kierunku pielęgniarstwo przez badanych było spowodowane potrzebą pomagania innym (46%), było kwestią przypadku (25%), kontynuacją rodzinnych tradycji (3%), a także możliwością ciągłego kontaktu z ludźmi (8%). Ponad połowa badanych (56%) jest zadowolona z podjętej decyzji. Respondentki podczas pracy z pacjentem czują się potrzebne (65%), wyczerpane psychicznie (43%), wyczerpane fizycznie (34%), zmęczone (20%), dowartościowane (20%), zadowolone z życia (18%), wypalone (10%), sfrustrowane (8%). Swobodnie o swoich odczuciach może mówić jedynie 7% badanych, pozostałe respondentki obawiają się złej opinii nauczyciela (87%), zespołu terapeutycznego (90%). Zdecydowanie do pracy za granicę wyjechałoby 40% ankietowanych.

**Wnioski:** Najczęstsze przyczyny stresu zawodowego to odpowiedzialność za ludzkie życie oraz śmierć pacjenta. Badani rzadko poszukują wsparcia wśród nauczycieli zawodu.

**Słowa kluczowe:** system kształcenia, stres, studenci pielęgniarstwa

## Summary

**Introduction:** The phenomenon of occupational stress can very often be found during the education process among nursing students. A very large number of hours of practical training, contact with the real treatment environment, constitute the same threats as in the case of people already in the profession. Stress, which can have a chronic dimension, poses a risk of dissatisfaction with the decision made and medical mistakes made by students. Satisfaction with the decision made about the profession is a multidimensional factor, including psychosocial values related to work.

**Objective:** The aim of the study is to assess the level of stress among nursing students during the practical education process and to analyze the level of satisfaction with the professional choice made.

**Material and method:** The study covered 200 people who are nursing students graduating from the three-year education period. The selection of respondents was random. The study group consisted of 100% women aged 23-45, living in urban areas (48%) and rural (52%).

**Research method:** The research method used in the work was a diagnostic survey. The research tool used is a self-help questionnaire.

**Results:** The nursing education by the respondents was caused by the need to help others (46%), was a matter of chance (25%), a continuation of family traditions (3%), and the possibility of constant contact with people (8%). Over half of the respondents (56%) are satisfied with the decision made. The respondents feel needed during work with the patient (65%), mentally exhausted (43%), physically exhausted (34%), tired (20%), valued (20%), satisfied with life (18%), burned out (10%), frustrated (8%). Only 7% of respondents can talk about their feelings, the remaining respondents are afraid of the teacher's poor opinion (87%) and the therapeutic team (90%). 40% of respondents would definitely go to work abroad.

**Conclusions:** The most common causes of occupational stress are the responsibility for human life and the death of the patient. The respondents rarely seek support among teachers of the profession.

**Keywords:** education system, stress, nursing students

## **Introduction**

The profession of a nurse is one of the high risk professions, that is, the essence of which is helping others. In addition to problems such as shortages of professional staff, the need to adapt to ever-increasing requirements, unsatisfactory working conditions, or a hierarchical system of professional dependency, there are also other such unfavorable opinions of society, the phenomenon of reducing the value of the former importance of the nurse profession. The basic factor is, however, the nature of the work performed - care and service. The nurse bears a lot of responsibility for human life, saving health, has constant contact with suffering. The patient's problems are not only health, but also psychological and social. Expectations of the patient regarding the nurse concern high efficiency, high level of fitness and often focus only on him and his suffering. Another specificity of sources of stress for a nurse is exposure to embarrassing aspects of human functioning, such as watching and touching a naked patient's body in not always pleasant functional states. In the patient, this is associated with the atmosphere of tension, shame or fear in the nurse with fear of infection [1]. The phenomenon of occupational stress can very often be found during the education process among nursing students. A very large number of hours of practical training, contact with the real treatment environment, constitute the same threats as in the case of people already in the profession. Stress, which can have a chronic dimension, poses a risk of dissatisfaction with the decision made and medical mistakes made by students. Satisfaction

with the decision made about the profession is a multidimensional factor, including psychosocial values related to work. Satisfaction from work is a match between the employee's needs and the way they are satisfied. If the workplace meets the needs of the employee, then it is difficult to talk about satisfaction. Choosing a nurse profession is always an important matter. This decision is not only a way of gaining livelihoods, but also opportunities, or not to satisfaction and satisfaction. It is important that the choice of profession is conscious. Consider both what it brings with it, as well as your own predispositions and interests. It is a service for human health for the most important value. The nurse's work consists of direct contact with people, their illness, frustration, suffering and death. This work requires high physical and mental strength. Therefore, it is so important that the profession chooses people ready to take on these challenges. The concept of job satisfaction is one of the research problems dealt with by work psychology. Nurses who are fulfilled in the profession feel satisfaction and more diligently perform the tasks entrusted to them. Awareness of a job well done, satisfaction of the patient, the praise of the superior, affects the level of satisfaction. Own contribution to work is also related to professional satisfaction. A high level of satisfaction affects the overall social satisfaction, and the provision of good enables achieving life success. This is the right way for people who enter it with a conscious choice [2,3,4,5].

## **Objective**

The aim of the study is to assess the level of stress among nursing students during the practical education process and to analyze the level of satisfaction with the professional choice made.

## **Material and method**

The study covered 200 people who are students of nursing, finishing the three-year education period. The selection of respondents was random. The study group consisted of 100% women aged 23-45, living in urban areas (48%) and rural (52%). The research method used in the work was a diagnostic survey. The research tool used is a self-help questionnaire.

All statistical calculations were performed using StatSoft, Inc. statistical package (2011). STATISTICA (data analysis software system), version 10.0. [www statsoft.com.](http://www.statsoft.com), statistical package R version 2.15.1 and Excel spreadsheet.

## Results

The nursing education by the respondents was caused by the need to help others (46%), was a matter of chance (25%), a continuation of family traditions (3%), and the possibility of constant contact with people (8%). Over half of the respondents (56%) are satisfied with the decision made. Most of the respondents think that if they were to choose the field of study again, the decision would be the same (67%). The respondents feel needed during work with the patient (65%), mentally exhausted (43%), physically exhausted (34%), tired (20%), valued (20%), satisfied with life (18%), burned out (10%), frustrated (8%). The vast majority of respondents feel needed and valued (67%). During practical classes the subjects try to understand their patients and help them in the best possible way (79%), 16% of respondents try to devote as much attention and time to their patients, 8% of respondents say that working with patients makes them sensible, while 7% avoid problem patients, claims and reluctant to perform caring activities with them. According to the research, 7% of respondents admit that they sometimes treat patients as subjects, and 1% of respondents think that it becomes more and more indifferent to the patient's fate. As many as 70% of the respondents are experiencing problems of patients. In the face of a stressful situation, the majority of respondents (55%) are controlled. The vast majority of respondents consider working with the patient as stressful (89%). The most stressful factor for the respondents is responsibility for human life (82%) and death of the patient (88%), followed by helplessness in the situations in question (19%). In the situation of stress during professional activities, the most common are irritability (69%), nervousness (31%), fear (26%), and helplessness (20%). 68% of respondents do not have problems sleeping, 20% of respondents often wakes up at night, and 12% of respondents have difficulty falling asleep. The most frequently occurring psychosomatic symptoms are excessive sweating (38%) difficulties in concentration (60%), as well as headaches (15%). The majority of respondents (69%) in stressful situations try to concentrate on the problem and wonder how to solve it, while 31% try to control the situation. The activities of the respondents in stressful situations are interview with their friends (44%), interview with nurses from the ward (20%), conversation with the teacher (15%), looking for support from family members (25%), no action (20%). 55% of respondents consider satisfactory tasks performed as part of their vocational training, the remaining 45% claim that they do not give them personal satisfaction. The respondents feel valued in society (34%), and definitely appreciated by patients (68%). The respondents are rather not underestimated by doctors (38%), strongly believes that 12% of

respondents are neglected. Patients and their families rather show gratitude for the work they have done (32%), and their ungratefulness turns out to be 16%. The knowledge of the respondents is used while working with the patient (67%), 33% of respondents declare not using their own knowledge. Only 58% of respondents like to work with a patient. Only 7% of respondents can talk about their feelings, the remaining respondents are afraid of the teacher's poor opinion (87%) and the therapeutic team (90%). 40% of respondents would definitely go to work abroad.

## **Discussion**

Stress accompanies every human being in life. The nurse profession carries special work-related burdens. The nurse is constantly exposed to specific stress, the source of which is the second person. Mainly it is a patient, but also other nurses, a doctor, or even a sick family with whom he has contact. The nurse is the only person from the entire therapeutic team who is constantly at the patient. Professional stress is manifested in her: physical factors - here are: unfavorable housing conditions, the technical condition of the equipment she uses, the lack of access to a patient's bed from both sides, the lack of devices to facilitate work and reducing physical effort in the ward, the size of the rooms not adjusted to deployed beds in them; mental factors - they include: a sense of responsibility for the life and health of patients, the need for constant vigilance, night shifts, change of work, the need for additional work due to low earnings, relationships with patients, lack of family care in the care of the patient, increase in patients' requirements, contact with pain and suffering, contact with infectious material and fear of infection; social factors - this is mainly about the low prestige of the profession [1,6,8].

Professional work is one of the most important activities of an adult person and is of great importance to him. In addition to its positive meaning, it can be a source of frustration and mental discomfort. The nurse performs the so-called the profession of social services, which is why it is exposed to many stressors associated with saving and protecting the life of another human being. Behavior in the work environment illustrates the relationship of a person to occupational duties. A man who is co-responsible for what is happening at work creates an individual pattern of behavior. This formula defines the indicators of the existing expectations and requirements of the individual regarding the work environment and the dimension of behaviors that are the result of past experience and experiences. The manner in which a working person functions in a professional environment is one of many health threats [7,8].

Job satisfaction is a general positive evaluation of work by a given subject, however, it does not exclude a negative assessment of its individual components. Job satisfaction is a feeling of pleasure or unpleasantness in performing tasks and performing roles. Satisfaction with life is a term that includes many factors. It is influenced by personality traits, life events. Satisfaction in psychology is called positive and negative feelings and attitudes that refer to the professional duties performed by employees. Satisfaction depends on many factors related to work. It is also influenced by individual factors (age, state of health, seniority, emotional stability, social status, entertainment, family ownership, motivations and aspirations of the employee), and the way they satisfy themselves through work, also affects attitudes towards work. Satisfaction from work is the result of employee involvement in professional duties, and the results of such engagement, such as: promotion, bonus, or notice by the employer, or satisfaction of people for whom this job is done. There are activities that give little satisfaction and those that people want to do their best, using all the possibilities, experiences, and intelligence. There are people whose work is not satisfying, but they value cooperation with others, the atmosphere at work, meeting other people [9,10,11].

## **Conclusions**

1. The most frequent cause of stress among respondents was the responsibility for human life and the death of the patient.
2. Psychosomatic symptoms of stress include difficulty falling asleep, difficulty concentrating, headaches.
3. The respondents rarely seek support among teachers of the profession.
4. In the situation of stress, the accompanying emotions are irritated, nervousness and helplessness.
5. Most respondents would choose education in nursing again.

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