



Literature Reviews

Stress symptoms among adolescents before and after scoliosis surgery: correlations with post-operative pain

Rullander, A.C., Lundström, M., Lindkvist, M., Hägglöf, B., and Lindh, V. (2016) *Journal of Clinical Nursing* 25(7–8): 1086-1094

Aim

This study aims to describe the stress symptoms adolescents experience before and after corrective scoliosis surgery and to explore any correlations with post-operative pain.

Background

Identifies the extensive nature of surgical procedures performed for the correction of adolescent idiopathic scoliosis and the severe pain that this surgery can cause. Previous research has identified a link between anxiety and post-operative pain; however there is a lack of knowledge about the adolescent idiopathic scoliosis patient's recovery and post operative stress and the connection to pre operative stress and post operative pain. Three hypotheses are postulated.

Design

This is a prospective quantitative study.

Sample

Thirty seven adolescents between the ages of 12 and 18 were recruited consecutively from 4 Swedish centres.

Data collection

Three psychometric instruments were used to assess the experiences of the participants prior to surgery and at 6 to 8 months after surgery. In addition, the visual analogue scale (VAS) was used for self-report of post-operative pain on day three.

Data analysis

Data analysis included descriptive measures (mean and standard deviations), paired sample t-test and simple linear regression. SPSS Software was used. There were no missing data from the 3 questionnaires but not all VAS scales on day 3 were recorded. Missing data are addressed.

Results

Of the 37 adolescents recruited to the program only 28 remained for the follow-up. The findings demonstrate that the participants reported higher stress symptoms before surgery than after. Levels of stress symptoms before surgery correlated positively with post-operative pain on day three. Post-operative pain on day three also correlated positively with stress symptoms 6–8 months after surgery. Two of the hypotheses were supported; that preoperative stress symptoms correlate with postoperative pain on day three and that post-operative pain on day three correlates with a high level of stress symptoms at six month follow-up. However, the hypothesis that pre-op stress symptoms correlate with high levels of stress symptoms at six month follow-up was not supported.

Conclusions

Levels of stress symptoms before major surgery correlate with levels of postoperative pain and the level of post-operative pain correlates with the level of anxiety during the recovery period.

Relevance to clinical practice

The findings indicate that post operative pain levels could be lowered with pre-operative interventions to reduce stress related symptoms. Training for health care workers in stress reducing techniques could play an important role in this.

The juxtaposition of ageing and nursing: the challenges and enablers of continuing to work in the latter stages of a nursing career

Clendon, J. and Walker, L. (2016) *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 72(5): 1065-1074

Aim

The study aimed to identify why some nurses cope well with continuing to work as they age, while others struggle.

Background

The background provides an overview of the ageing nature of the nursing workforce and identifies the physical changes associated with ageing in nurses. It highlights the statistically significant relationship between age and musculoskeletal disorders in nurses and the suggestion that the high physical demands of nursing can be directly related to the existence of musculoskeletal disorders. Coping strategies that older nurses adopt are linked to a range of resilience characteristics among nurses that can be linked to coping strategies.

Design

This was a secondary analysis of existing data which were collected in two separate studies.

Sample

The first set of data was obtained from a large anonymous survey which received 3273 responses (57.6%). The second was obtained from a series of individual and focus group interviews with 46 nurses aged over 50.

Data collection

The 1st study used an online survey to identify the characteristics of nurses age 50 and over in the New Zealand workplace. The quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics and free text responses were grouped thematically. The second study used an exploratory descriptive design with a broadly qualitative methodology. Five focus groups and three individual interviews were undertaken, while a further seven nurses provided a written contribution. Data were analysed using a general inductive approach to identify themes.

Data analysis

The secondary analysis investigated the qualitative data from the two studies. This comprised of the free text comments in study one and the interviews in study two. Original themes were identified from both studies, were reviewed and similarities identified. A general inductive approach was used for analysis and identification of new or emerging themes relevant to the juxtaposition of aging and nursing.

Findings

The analysis identified two emerging themes; "the challenges of ageing of nursing" and "factors that enable nurses to continue to practice". Challenges included physical challenges, fatigue, ageism and guilt, while personal fitness self-care and flexible working were identified as enablers that allowed work to continue. A strong belief in the ability to contribute to the profession was high in all the nurses who continued to practice.

Conclusion

Nurses face growing physical and cognitive challenges as they age but still feel they have much to offer the nursing profession. They demonstrate resilience in their desire to keep working and demonstrate a range of ways in which they cope with the challenges of ageing.

Relevance to practice

While nurses need to acknowledge the impact of ageing on their practice, managers and organisations have a vital role in supporting them to age well at work. Older nurses are a valuable resource and need to be retained to alleviate pending workforce shortages and maintain the knowledge required for an effective workplace.

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