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Compassion Fatigue, Resilience, and Intent to Stay: A Quantitative Study Among Nurse Educators

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Purpose: Replenishing and sustaining the number of registered nurses needed to meet the demands of the United States healthcare system is an increasing struggle for nursing schools across the country. The nurse educator shortage has resulted in nursing schools being filled to capacity, requiring educators to work extended hours in understaffed environments. Although nurse educators are deeply committed to the students they mentor and serve, the increasing demands of the multifaceted role may lead to symptoms of compassion fatigue. The problem is that nurse educators may be leaving their positions in academia due to high levels of compassion fatigue and lack of resilience. The purpose of this quantitative cross-sectional regression study was to describe and predict nurse educators' level of compassion fatigue and the degree of resilience on the intent-to-stay in academia.

Methods: A quantitative cross-sectional regression method was used to meet the purpose of this study with the intent of objectively measuring and predicting nurse educators' level of compassion fatigue and the degree of resilience on the intent-to-stay in academia. Three established instruments were used, the Professional Quality of Life Scale version 5 was used to measure compassion fatigue, the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale was used to measure resilience, and the Price Scale on Intent to Stay was used to measure nurse educator intent-to-stay. The anonymous survey was developed and distributed through Qualtrics software, and the analysis was completed through Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 25.

Results: A total of 146 nurse educators were surveyed. The results indicated that compassion fatigue was a significant predictor of the intent-to-stay, explaining 3.6% of the variance ($\beta = .19, p = .021$). Approximately 73% of nurse educators reported a moderate to high-risk severity of burnout symptoms. While some nurse educators reported high compassion satisfaction (32%), others only had moderate to low compassion satisfaction scores (67.8%). The existing literature indicated resilience as a significant predictor of intent to stay. Although resilience was not a predictor of intent-to-stay in this study, burnout ($p = .000$) and compassion satisfaction ($p = .000$) were significant predictors of resilience, with burnout accounting for 4.5% of the variance and compassion satisfaction accounting for 26.4% of the variance.

Conclusion: This study provided the first evidence of recognizing that compassion fatigue existed among nurse educators in the United States, and indicated that nurse educators experiencing compassion fatigue were more likely to remain in their current academic positions. Nurse educators are one of the most essential tools in nursing student success and require intervention to maintain their overall health and sustain working in the stressful environment of academia. Nursing leaders have a responsibility to raise awareness, identify, and then provide the resources nurse educators need to overcome the symptoms of compassion fatigue. Developing strategies to promote compassion satisfaction and build resilience can have a positive impact on student

success, job performance, fostering a supportive work environment, and increasing the likelihood of educators staying in their current positions.

Title:

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Keywords:

Compassion Fatigue, Nurse Educators and Resilience

Abstract Summary:

Compassion fatigue is impacting the personal and professional well being of nurse educators. Important for nurse educator health and overall student success, nursing leaders have a responsibility to raise awareness, identify early warning signs, and provide resources and resilience training for educators who are currently suffering in silence.

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Author Summary: Brenda Ulmen has been a registered nurse for 21 years and a nursing professor for 6 years. She is interested in the health and welfare of nurse educators, with a passion of raising awareness about symptoms of compassion fatigue in educators, and how to increase resilience among educators in the United States.