



Nurse Educators' Experience of Compassion Fatigue

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Compassion Fatigue

- ▶ A form of post-traumatic stress disorder in which caregivers develop a secondary trauma by becoming affected during repeated care of patients experiencing a traumatic event
- ▶ In general, nurses have been noted to be particularly at risk for compassion fatigue, but little research has considered nursing faculty
- ▶ Additional need to examine impact of work environment/empowerment and other factors on compassion fatigue

Research Questions

- ▶ *What is the overall experience of compassion fatigue among nursing faculty?*
- ▶ *Is there a correlation between the experience of compassion fatigue and various demographic factors?*
- ▶ *Is there a correlation between the experience of compassion fatigue and workplace empowerment?*
- ▶ *Is there a correlation between the experience of compassion fatigue and religiosity?*

Methods

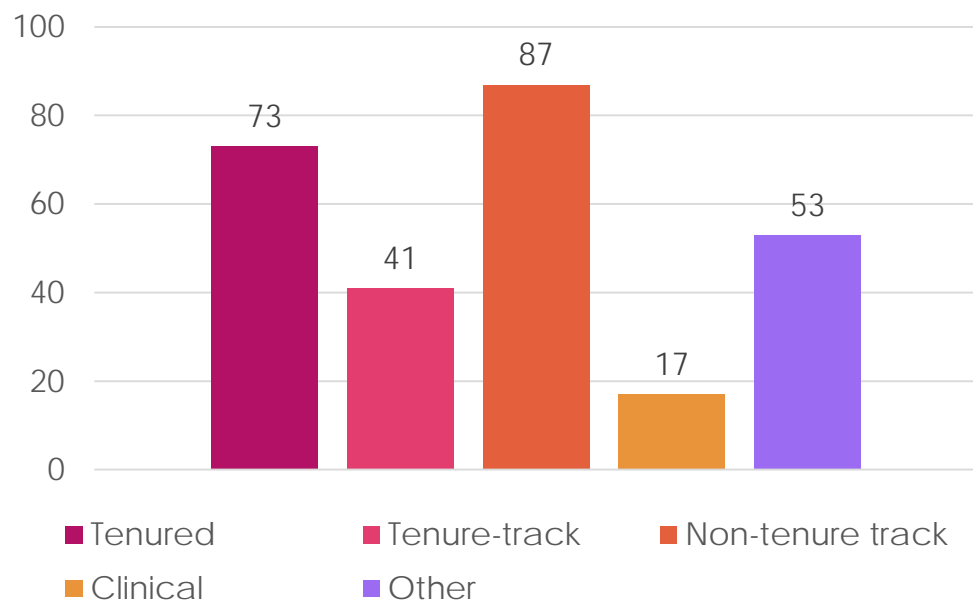
- ▶ Mixed methods
 - ▶ Survey instruments and open-ended questions
- ▶ Email and social media recruitment
- ▶ Survey Instruments
 - ▶ Professional Quality of Life (ProQOL V) tool
 - ▶ Conditions of Work Effectiveness Questionnaire II (CWEQ-II)
 - ▶ Duke Religion Index

Findings

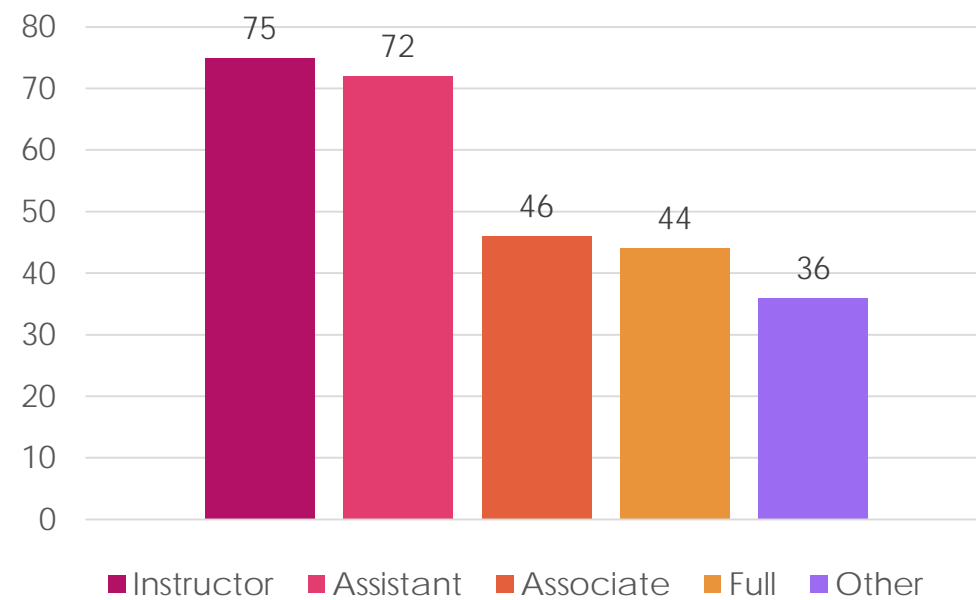
- ▶ Demographics (n=282)
 - ▶ 53.4 average age (SD 9.8, range 25 – 75)
 - ▶ 94% female
 - ▶ 77% married
 - ▶ 57% had administrative responsibilities
 - ▶ 67% were not represented by collective bargaining
 - ▶ 60% engaged in team teaching

Findings

Tenure Status

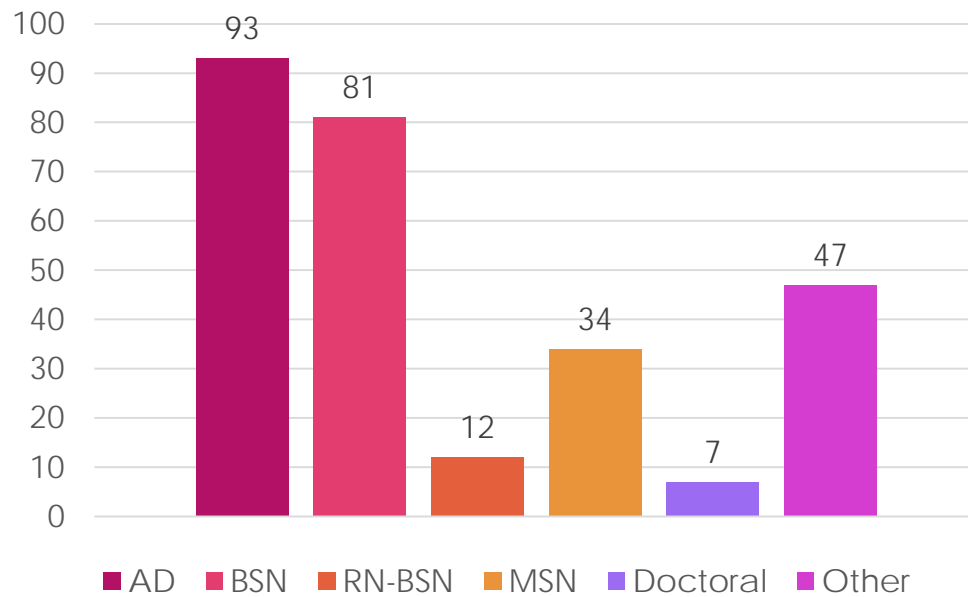


Academic Rank

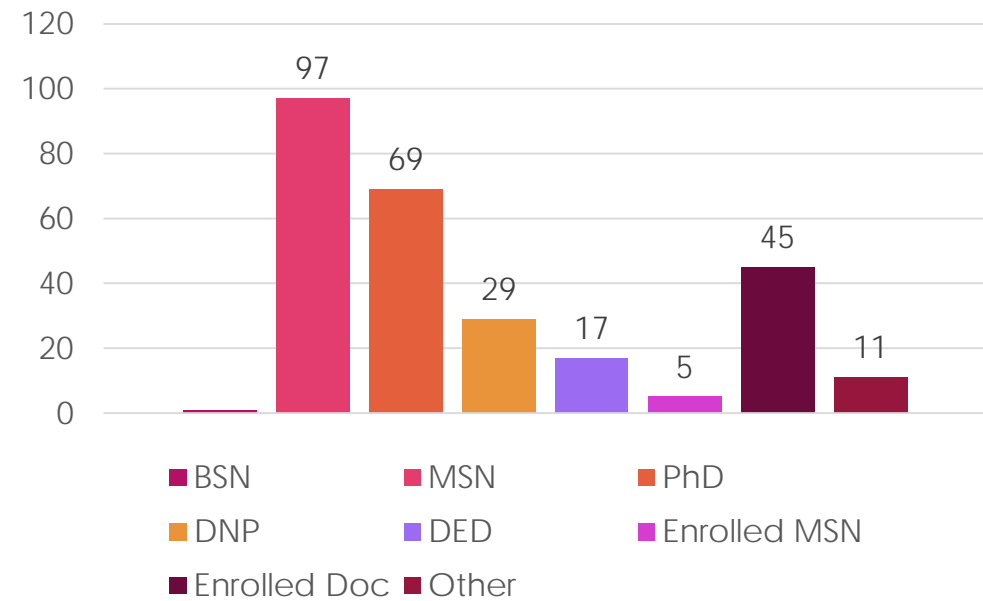


Findings

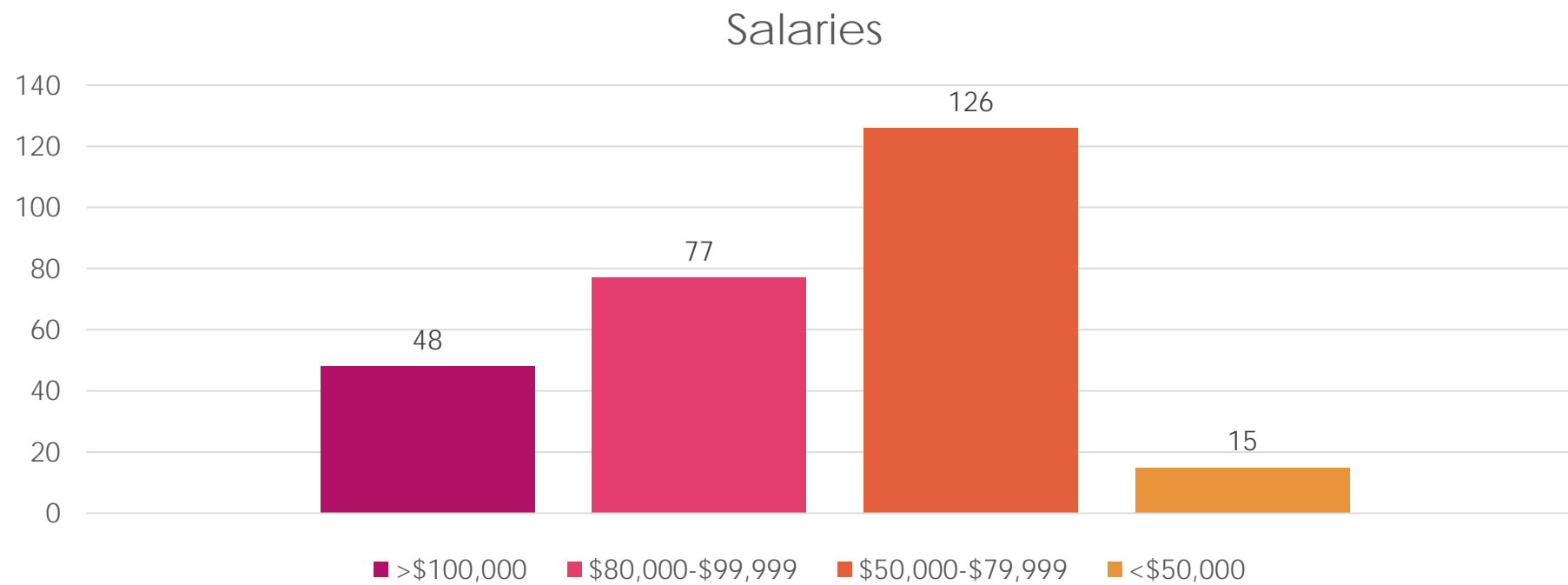
Primary Area of Teaching



Degrees

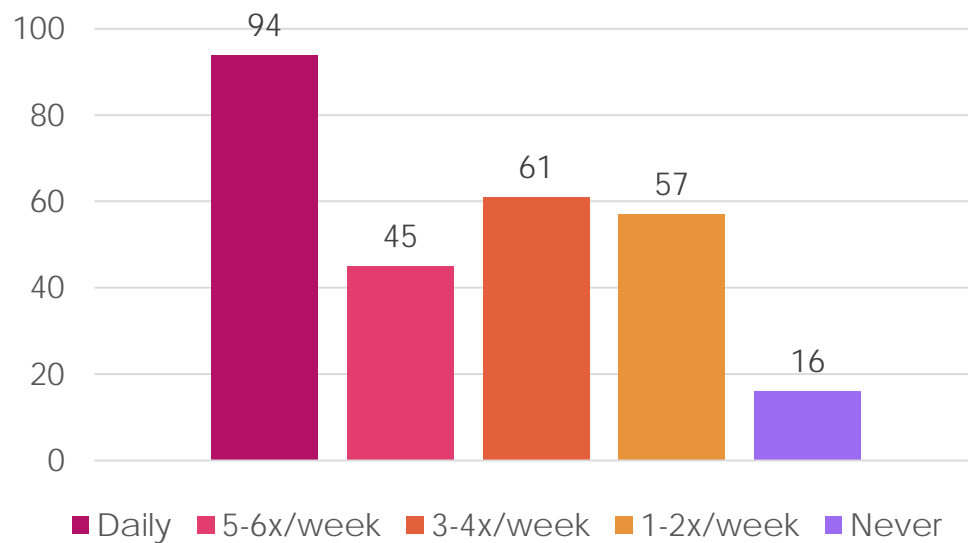


Findings

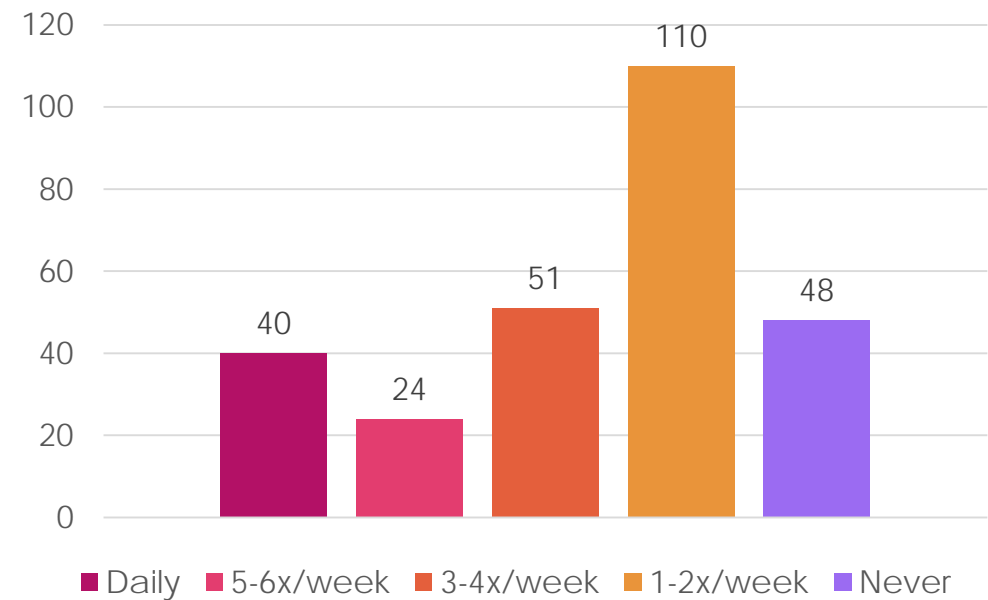


Findings

Frequency of Bringing Work Home



Frequency of Self-Care



Research Question 1 – Experience of Compassion Fatigue

▶ ProQOL Scores

- ▶ Compassion satisfaction score mean **41.9** (22 – 50) – average level*
- ▶ Burnout score mean **21.4** (10 – 36) – low level*
- ▶ Secondary Traumatic Stress score mean **19.5** (10 – 34) – low level*

*Based on cut scores offered by Stamm (2010)

Research Question 2 – Compassion Fatigue and Demographics

- ▶ Significant relationship ($p = .046$) between compassion satisfaction and salary
- ▶ ANOVA with Tukey's post-hoc analysis: most significant differences between those making \$50,000 - \$79,000 and those making more than \$100,000 annually ($p=.036$, 95% CI [.12, 5.02]).

Research Question 2 – Compassion Fatigue and Demographics

- ▶ Significant relationships between frequency of bringing work home and compassion satisfaction ($p=.001$), burnout ($p=.000$) and secondary traumatic stress ($p=.017$)
 - ▶ Significantly lower levels of compassion satisfaction for those that brought work home daily versus those that never brought work home ($p=.004$, 95% CI [-9.25, -1.16]) and those that brought work home 1 – 2 days per week ($p=.029$, 95% CI [-5.27, -.18])
 - ▶ Those who brought work home daily had higher levels of burnout than those faculty who reported bringing work home three to four times per week ($p=.001$, 95% CI [1.18, 5.98]), one to two times per week ($p=.000$, 95% CI [1.74, 6.67]), and never ($p=.000$, 95% CI [3.99, 11.83])
 - ▶ For STS, the difference existed between bringing work home daily versus rarely (never or one to two times per week), though the pair-wise analysis was not found to be significant

Research Question 2 – Compassion Fatigue and Demographics

- ▶ Significant relationships between frequency of engaging in self-care activities higher levels of compassion satisfaction ($p=.013$) and lower levels of burnout ($p=.012$)
 - ▶ Post hoc analysis demonstrated the differences for compassion satisfaction existed between those that engaged in daily purposeful self-care and those that never engaged in self-care ($p=.037$, 95% CI [.12, 6.59]) and those that engaged only one to two times per week ($p=.005$, 95% CI [.75, 6.36])
 - ▶ For burnout, the post-hoc analysis suggested the greatest difference existed between those who engaged in self-care daily versus rarely (never or one to two times per week), however, the post-hoc pairwise analysis was not statistically significant.

Research Question 3: Compassion Fatigue and Workplace Environment

- ▶ A significant positive correlation was found to exist between compassion satisfaction and perceived access to opportunity ($r=.144$, $p=.02$)
- ▶ No significant relationships were found between burnout and secondary traumatic stress and work environment subscales

Research Question 4: Compassion Fatigue and Religiosity

- ▶ Burnout and intrinsic religiosity demonstrated a significant negative correlation ($r = -.12$, $p = .05$)
- ▶ Largest portion of respondents (34.6%) reported weekly attendance at organized religious activities
- ▶ Largest portion of respondents (43.8%) reported engaging daily/more than daily non-organized religious activities
- ▶ Moderately high level of intrinsic religiosity: 11.86, SD 3.2, Range 3 - 15

Qualitative Findings

- ▶ Three themes identified
 - ▶ Changing workplace
 - ▶ Love for teaching despite significant demands of the job and minimal salaries
 - ▶ Administrative / leadership challenges- *"We are heard but not listened to"*

Discussion

- ▶ Average level of compassion satisfaction and low levels of burnout and secondary traumatic stress
- ▶ Impact of salary
- ▶ Impact of bringing work home
 - ▶ Hyper-connected world!
- ▶ Limited relationships between compassion fatigue and work environment

Future Directions

- ▶ Larger scale study
- ▶ Consider a different work environment scale
- ▶ Intervention study potential