

Relationships between Job Strain, Coping Strategies, and Work Performance among Oncology Nurses Working in Saudi Oncology Care Settings

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Purpose: To investigate the relationship between job strain, coping strategies, and work performance among oncology nurses working in Saudi oncology care settings. The study tested a model that proposed a mediating effect for coping strategies on the job strain and work performance relationship.

Background: Job strain is reported to affect coping strategies and work performance among nurses, thus compromising oncology nursing care and placing patients' lives at risk. A review of the literature has revealed that although a great deal of research has been conducted internationally about job strain, coping strategies, and work performance in nurses, very little of this research has included oncology nurses or nurses in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA).

Methods: A predictive, correlational cross-sectional study was conducted with 241 oncology nurses from five hospitals in the KSA. A survey instrument, based on pre-existing standardized tools, including demographic and work items, was used. The data were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 22) (IBM Corp, 2013) and AMOS 21.0 software package (Arbuckle, 2012). Structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to test the study model that proposed a mediating effect for coping strategies on job strain and work performance.

Findings: Study findings demonstrated that participants experienced low to high levels of job strain. The SEM analysis indicated a good fit for the hypothesized model. Coping strategies significantly partially mediated job strain/ on work performance among KSA oncology nurses. There were also significant differences in levels of job strain, coping strategies, and work performance between nurses from KSA's publicly and privately funded hospitals, type of oncology units, and oncology nursing education/preparation.

Conclusion: Coping strategies are important mechanisms through which job strain can impact oncology nurses' work performance.

Implications for Nursing Management: Knowledge gained from this study may be useful in improving oncology nurses work environments and in assisting nurse managers policy development in the KSA. Nursing managers must be aware of the role of coping strategies in reducing job strain and improving work performance among oncology nurses.

Key words: job strain, outcomes of job strain, coping strategies, work performance, oncology nurses, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, work environment, nursing management.