Effects of Shift length on Nursing Staff’s productivity, safety, and wellbeing; a quantitative literature review and research study
Clinical Practice Issues

- There are many different shift-lengths for nurses
- Most common/popular are 8 and 12 hour shifts
  - Does not include overtime
- Is there a correlation between longer shift lengths and rates of nurse burnout, job satisfaction, job efficiency, and safety of work environment for nurses?
Significance to Nursing

- Nurses need to be able to function as efficiently as possible
- Looking at relationships between shift length and outcomes will hopefully help better nursing practice and policy
1. Shift length does have an effect on patient satisfaction, nurse burnout, and job satisfaction for nurses. Those who work twelve-hour shifts were two and a half times more likely to experience burnout from their job as well as have intentions of leaving compared to those who worked eight-hour shifts. However, eighty percent of nurses said they were satisfied with their current shift length whether it was twelve or eight hours. (Stimfel et. al, 2012)

2. Twelve-hour shifts were associated with poorer patient outcomes, nurses’ satisfaction, and getting work done. Those who worked eight-hour shifts were overall more effective at their job than those who worked twelve-hour shifts. (Ball et. al, 2017)
3. Researchers found that the effects of shift length depend on which unit the nurse was on. Though other studies have found negative outcomes around 12-hour shift lengths this case study does not strongly indicate this to be true. (Ballie et. al, 2019)

4. Longer shifts are associated with higher rates of burnout and overall dissatisfaction among nurses. Nurses working 12 hours or more were more likely to have reported emotional exhaustion than those working 8 hours or less. Overall, those working 8.1 hours and above reported higher rates of dissatisfaction and intention to leave their job than those working 8 hour or less than 8-hour shifts. (Dall’ora et. al, 2015)
Review of Literature

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STRENGTHS:

- Large Sample sizes used
- Diverse populations ie multiple types of nursing units looked at
- Reliable tools utilized for gathering and analyzing data

LIMITATIONS:

- Mostly cross-sectional studies/data
- Volunteer methods of recruitment
- Poor response rates
Overview of Literature

- Most research pointed towards a relationship between shift length and outcomes at hand
- Overall, reliable results calculated
- Good sample sizes, reliability of tools utilized leads to acceptance of results for a greater population
- Most studies done on the East Coast or other countries, need to look at data more locally
Research Proposal

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- GOALS: To provide clarity to the problem at hand as it pertains to Sigma Theta Tau members
  
  - Is there a correlation between longer shift lengths and rates of nurse burnout, job satisfaction, and safety of work environment for nurses as well as for patients?
Benefits

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CLINICAL NURSING PRACTICE

- Regulations and guidelines
- Less work related stress
- Better ability to focus and get all work done
- Mental and physical exhaustion and fatigue lowered

PATIENT OUTCOMES

- Less hospital acquired infections
- Lower incidence of medical errors
- Higher overall satisfaction for patients
- Lower readmission rates
Methods

- A questionnaire sent out to members of STT via their email list
  - Sample size of 15-20 ideal
  - Years as an RN, normal shift length, job satisfaction, intention to leave job, percent of work completed in an average shift, and mental physical health. All questions will be answered on a 7-point Likert Scale from 1-7, with intention to leave job being a yes/no/do not know or prefer not to answer question.
Ethics

- The criteria is that you are a nurse who is a member of Sigma Theta Tau
- Email Recruitment—those who reply to the email with their answers will be participants in the study
- An explanation will be provided before the questionnaire about the study along with an explanation letter, and those who do not wish to participate can simply disregard the email.
Analysis

- Data converted into numerical values
- ANOVA, LSD, Sheffe

In the whole scheme of things, are we really so different?
Results

- 19 overall respondents to the survey
  - All from STT Rho Alpha chapter (email responses)
- All respondents answered all questions
- Data was evenly distributed
- Those who have been working their shift longest are the most satisfied with it
  - Between 3 and 6 (in years as RN) p value was 0.13--significant
Results Cont.

- No significant correlation between length of shift and satisfaction, mental/physical health, or intention to leave job
- Majority of respondents were satisfied with their job, no one was “neutral” about it
  - 72.8% satisfied, 27.2% dissatisfied
- Those who have been working as an RN for >12 years reported overall better mental health than those who had been working 4-6 years.
Discussion

- Results semi-congruent with those of researchers
  - All found that, overall, people are happy with the length of shift they are currently working
- Some factors which were taken into consideration in literature which were not looked into during the current study
- Overall, participants said they were happy, healthy, and would like to stay at their current job
Conclusion

- Research points to there being no significant relationship between the factors in the research question.
- Would need more extensive research to draw definitive conclusions or look for relationships between other factors.
References


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