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REVIEW ARTICLE

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BURNOUT SYNDROME IN INTENSIVE CARE UNIT NURSES: INTEGRATIVE REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Burnout is identified as a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and decreased personal fulfillment, occurring in nursing professionals due to continued exposure to situations with people with chronic diseases, work overload, among other situations. The present study aims to analyze the studies published in Periodicals about the theme Burnout Syndrome in nurses working in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). Through an Integrative Review of the exploratory, descriptive literature. The scope of the research was based on 11 articles on the subject raised in the MEDLINE, LILACS and BDNF databases, from 2008 to 2018. The results presented show signs and symptoms of Burnout Syndrome developed by ICU nurses and which factors influence the disease process. With the present study we seek to instigate new researchers in the investigation about Burnout Syndrome in ICU Nurses.

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years the relationship between occupational stress and mental health of workers has been researched due to worrying levels of temporary disability, absenteeism, and early retirement and health risks associated with professional activity (MORENO *et al.* 2010). The quality of life of health workers is directly linked to different occupational stressors. According to Kovaleski and Bressan (2012) there are several reasons that lead to occupational stress, such as: the lack of trained professionals or individuals, exhausting working hours, exposure of the professional to chemical and physical risks, lack of professional recognition as well as constant contact with suffering, pain and even death. Given all these factors, health professionals should be mindful of their mental and emotional health more than professionals in other areas. The Intensive Care Unit (ICU) is a state-of-the-art facility, designed for patients in need of complex care and continuous monitoring. Recognized for being an unpleasant environment with noise, alarms, constant lighting, invasive procedures and professional movement (OUCHI, *et al.* 2018).

The ICU care is usually mechanical, biological, psychological and social patient are delayed, or are left to the background. On the other hand, the nurse should be prepared since graduation to get awareness that regardless of technology, care should always be humanized (OUCHI *et al.* 2018). The exercise of the nursing profession in the ICU has as a result a high rate of depression among these professionals to work with seriously ill people, going through grief, stress of day-to-day also, for it is often necessary that the nurse has more than one job for low pay, work in multiple locations where the structure is not adequate, causing decreased motivation at work, emotional stress among other stresses (FERREIRA *et al.* 2012). The interest in that theme originated from participation in an extension project on burnout syndrome at the University Center of João Pessoa - UNIPÊ, where in addition to study the issue, we develop activities in health institutions, expanding the understanding and the will in Burnout work. During the work on Burnout, what struck the most was the fact that some nursing professionals are unaware of the Burnout Syndrome and the damage that it can cause to health, mental and

emotional. Given this experience came the need to know how Burnout Syndrome happens in nurses who work in ICUs because we understand that it is a place that requires stressful work dealing daily with loss and grief, which reflect on their personal and emotional life. These patients are totally dependent on the professional, especially the nursing staff, who end up with an accelerated work rate. Thus, the need to know aspects guided by the following question: "what are the symptoms and factors influencing burnout in nurses working in the ICU?" We analyze the studies published in journals on the theme Burnout syndrome in nurses working in the ICU.

METHODOLOGY

It is an integrative literature review, exploratory and descriptive. According to Mendes, Silveira e Galvão (2008) aims at presenting the general concepts and steps for the elaboration of the integrative review, just as material respects, with the purpose of this method for research in nursing. Exploratory because according to Gil (2002) familiarizes him with the problem, making it more comprehensive to build hypotheses. It may include bibliographic survey. It is usually presented in the form of bibliographic research and case study and descriptive because it exposes characteristics of a particular population or phenomenon or the establishment of relationships between variables. The integrative review is an extensive and methodological approach described in six steps, which are: identification of the theme and selection of the hypothesis or research question for the elaboration of the integrative review; establishment of criteria for inclusion and exclusion of studies / sampling or literature search; definition of information to be extracted from selected studies / categorization of studies; evaluation of studies included in the integrative review; interpretation of results; presentation of the review / synthesis of knowledge.

In the first stage we define the theme to be studied and elaborate the guiding question to be worked on throughout the process. In the second stage there was the development of research on Burnout Syndrome in ICU nurses, so the universe of this study was composed of scientific articles published in the databases of the Virtual Health Library (VHL): Nursing Database (BDENF); Latin American and Caribbean Health Sciences Literature (LILACS) and Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System Online (MEDLINE). The choice of these databases was due to the fact that they present articles within the theme. To search the literature were used as inclusion criteria: being in Portuguese, English and Spanish; available in full, in full text, have a collection in the international and national databases, have been published in the period 2008 to 2018. Paid thesis, dissertation and monograph works, not in accordance with the objective, will be excluded present research, in addition to those in duplicate. We performed the search for articles, paying attention to the inclusion and exclusion criteria previously described, in the LILACS, MEDLINE and BDENF databases, from 2008 to 2018, using keywords and synonym of descriptors consulted in the Descriptors in Health Sciences (DeCS): "professional exhaustion" AND "nurses" AND "critical care". These keywords answered the Portuguese, English and Spanish languages. Before conducting the search on the database, select 47 items, 9 in LILACS, 3 and 34 BDENF MEDLINE. We continued the analysis with a pre-reading of the title and abstract and selected 11 articles that covered the theme, 4 in LILACS, 1 in BDENF and 6 in MEDLINE.

In the third stage, definition of the information to be extracted from the selected studies / categorization of the studies, the articles that covered the studied theme were counted, then, after careful reading of the selected articles, important information was removed to meet the objective of the study by placing them in an instrument prepared for this purpose, containing: title, year, language, results, objective methods and descriptors. In the fourth stage, evaluation of the studies included in the integrative review, the critical analysis of the included articles was performed. We selected 11 articles that addressed the theme worked, for printing and reading in full. In the fifth step, interpretation of the results, we sought the objectives of the selected articles and analyzed the development of the theme that came to corroborate the elaboration of the discussions of the analyzed data. Given the steps described above, as it is an integrative literature review, performed on virtual platforms of unrestricted access, this study does not require submission to the Research Ethics Committee. The present study followed the ethics and rigor necessary for its elaboration, citing all the referenced authors.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Among the 11 selected articles that address the issue of Burnout Syndrome in ICU nurses, regarding the years of publication, it was found that 2017 was the year that appeared in the publication on the theme, with approximately 28% (n=3) of publications. Then came the years 2013, 2015 and 2016 with approximately 18% (n=2) of the publications each and 2009 and 2014 with approximately 9% (n=1) of the publications each. It was observed that there were no publications in the years 2008, 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2018. The data reveal how small the production on this theme is still small, although of relevance to the health of the ICU worker, with years without publications. Regarding the language of publication of the journals found, it can be observed that of the searched journals, the Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System Online (MEDLINE) was the magazine that presented the largest number of articles related to the theme, with occurrence and only 1 language, the English. Following is the Latin American and Caribbean Health Sciences Literature (LILACS) with publications in the researched languages, English and Spanish, 3 in English and 1 in Spanish. The journal Database of Nursing (BDENF) had 1 publication in the Portuguese language. These margins show that the journals, MEDLINE and LILACS, are prominent in the discussions regarding burnout syndrome in ICU nurses with critically ill patients. Considering the type of study used by the selected articles, it was possible to identify that they include the most frequent quantitative / cross-sectional method, 41.8% (n=5) of the publications, followed by the qualitative / cross-sectional method with 16.7% (n=2). Thus, it is possible to state that researchers understand that quantitative / cross-sectional studies better contemplate the need to know how Burnout Syndrome happens in nurses who work in the ICU. After analyzing the selected articles, two categories were created to better understand the burnout syndrome in ICU nurses.

Category 01: Factors that interfere with job dissatisfaction of ICU nurses

A recurring complaint in most articles by nursing professionals is the issues that generate dissatisfaction at work. According to Afecto and Teixeira (2009), ICU nurses often report high levels of stress and the main cause is probably continued care

for critically ill patients who need constant supervision. Other sources of stress mentioned are very large workloads, excessive liability, poor communication with medical staff and teams from other units. According to Sá and his collaborators (2014), not only the operational aspects make nursing work exhausting. The demands, the responsibility to their patients regarding the physical, moral, social and psychological, besides the fact that nursing has little status and prestige in an organization. Another important factor is the direct contact with pain, suffering and death, which demands greater emotional control from this professional compared to other professions. Stress occurs in hospitals, leading nurses, like other professionals, to physical and mental exhaustion. Making the nursing professional indifferent, apathetic and exhausted, contained by stress and demotivation, having consequences conflicts and dissatisfaction. Benetti *et al.*, (2009), in his statements, reinforces the data raised by the present study emphasizing that work is not always pleasurable due to the high daily demand for service provision. That direct contact with suffering, pain and death; the decrease of social and professional value; resource scarcity and work overload are predisposing factors for the occurrence of Burnout Syndrome. As a suggestion, Lunardi (2011) says that one way to intervene for the health of professionals is to stimulate dialogue between managers and nurses, seeking appropriate measures to alleviate disappointment, to ask professionals to be adjunct to the development of organizational policies. , conducting group activities and continuing education.

Category 02: Burnout Syndrome symptoms most frequent in ICU nurses

Burnout symptoms can be confused with depression or even anxiety attacks, as they are correlated with these conditions. In the articles studied some symptoms indicative of Burnout syndrome are described, they are, excessive tiredness, physical and mental, insomnia, feeling of failure and insecurity. Depression and stress get confused and make differential diagnosis very difficult at certain times. The most common symptoms of burnout are: low self-esteem, emotional exhaustion, effective distancing. Causing a feeling of low professional accomplishment, low job satisfaction (CÂNDIDO; SOUZA, 2017). According to the above authors, WHO has included Burnout in the new International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11), which should take effect on January 1, 2022. Jodas e Haddad (2009) collected data from an emergency unit of a public hospital, where most respondents were nursing technicians, and confirmed that most respondents were at risk for the development of burnout, many professionals have symptoms such as body aches, lack of time for themselves, insomnia and feeling of mental exhaustion. Rocha and Santos (2014) states that Burnout symptoms do not go away with vacations, can be incited by demotivating work, resulting from a long process, organizational factors contribute and as incredible as it seems, the idealistic people, involved with the work, enthusiastic are those that have the highest risk for the development of burnout. Silva *et al.* (2015), complements the statement by reinforcing that younger workers without a spouse, with excessive workload and professional dissatisfaction have a higher risk for burnout. They also confirm in their statements that Burnout Syndrome (BS) or "Professional Exhaustion" is a Psychological Syndrome resulting from the chronic emotional tension experienced by the worker, characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and low personal fulfillment that

can affect professionals whose work requires direct contact with the public. SB is recognized worldwide as one of the major psychosocial problems that affect the quality of life of professionals in various areas, especially those involving health care, education and human services, generating an important occupational and social issue.

Final Thoughts

The theme Burnout Syndrome has been gaining ground in the media. As this is a public health problem, it is necessary to propagate information about the theme, contributing to the workers' health. The discussion about the proposed theme is of great relevance because it analyzes cultural and social aspects involved with the illness of the worker and intrinsic issues to the work itself. This research was approached by the method of Integrative Literature Review, with exploratory and descriptive character. Eleven articles available in the BDENF, LILACS and MEDLINE databases were analyzed from 2008 to 2018 that addressed Burnout Syndrome in Nurses working in ICUs, in order to improve the development of the study. Given the results pointed out in this research we observed which symptoms of Burnout Syndrome are more frequent in nurses working in ICUs and which factors corroborate the onset of symptoms and development of Burnout Syndrome. After knowing the information raised by this study, we realize how important it is to know, prevent and treat Burnout Syndrome Symptoms and the factors that influence its onset. Considering that, the theme is of great relevance not only for nurses who work in ICUs, because it can originate in any area of health and not just health, but in any area that the development of work requires human relations. It is essential to value the mental health of the worker, remembering that the diseases are not limited only to those explicit by the body. Thus, strategies are needed to cope with labor adversities. Thus, we can say that the present study reached its objective which was to analyze the studies published in Periodicals about the theme Burnout Syndrome in nurses working in the ICU, answering our guiding question about the symptoms and factors that influence the development of Burnout Syndrome in nurses working in the ICU. We hope that the present study will stimulate new research on Burnout Syndrome in ICU nurses to learn about new aspects that may influence the process, as well as coping strategies for the sector. In addition to instigating the investigation of ICU Burnout Syndrome, we intend with this work to arouse the desire of other researchers to work on the subject in other areas, disseminating new information.

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