

Resiliency and Health in Nursing: Intra-Covid-19 Replication Study

MIKEL W HAND, EDD, RN, OCN, NE-BC, NEA-BC
RACHEL STANGLAND, MSN, RN, CNOR
TRACY MCKINNEY, BSN, RN, CHPN



Schneck
Medical
Center

Introduction to the Facility

Schneck Medical Center is a Not-for-profit, Acute Care Hospital located in Seymour, Indiana.

4-time Magnet® Designated (2006, 2011, 2016, 2021)

Malcom Baldrige National Quality Award 2011

2020 and 2021 Top 20 Rural Hospitals in America

5-Star CMS Quality Rating

Introduction to the Facility

Facility - Main campus with several outlying physician practices serving - Jackson, Jennings, Washington, and Scott Counties

Number of Licensed Beds - 166

Number of Staffed Beds - 93

Number of Surgical Cases Each Year - 9,500

Average Daily Inpatient Census - 28

Number of employees - 1,000+

STUDY PURPOSE AND AIMS

Purpose

To examine the post Covid-19 state of resiliency, mental health, and physical health of nurses at a rural community, Magnet Designated Organization

Assess for changes in baseline levels of health and resiliency in the population from data obtained during a pre-Covid-19 assessment.

Aims

Examine resiliency and perceived physical and mental health status of registered nurses working in a rural Magnet Designated Hospital pre and post Covid-19 using descriptive analysis.

Compare results from a pre-Covid 19 assessment of Resiliency and perceived physical and mental health with current findings.

BACKGROUND

The Covid-19 pandemic has had significant negative impacts on the ability of healthcare organizations to recruit and retain full-time RN staff.

Turnover of bedside RNs increased from 15.9% in 2020 to 18.7% in 2021 (Nursing Solutions Inc. (NSI), 2021).

The national RN vacancy rate as of 2021 stands at 9% with 62% of organizations reporting an RN vacancy rate higher than 7.5% (NSI, 2021).

Increase in the RN Recruitment Difficulty Index from 2020 to 2021 which ranged from 66 to 126 days depending on specialty and geographic location (NSI, 2021)

BACKGROUND

As a result of the continuing nursing staffing crisis, healthcare leaders must look for evidence-based ways to retain RNs.

The literature suggests that resiliency has the potential to positively impact **mental health** (García-Izquierdo et al., 2018), **physical health** (Labrague, 2021), and **turnover intention** (Falatah, 2021; Lin, Hu, Danaee, Alis, & Wong, 2021; Witkoski Stimpfel et al., 2021) **in the RN workforce**.

BACKGROUND

Addressing organizational barriers to improving RN resiliency, physical health and mental health will also be important for ensuring patient safety.

Mazurek-Melnyk et al. (2018) conducted an analysis of the impact of RNs' physical and mental health on medical errors and **found that nurses with poor physical health were 26% (OR = 1.26, 95% CI = 1.04-1.53) -71% (OR = 1.71, 95% CI = 1.40-2.08) more likely to make a medical error. Nurses with poor mental health including depression were significantly more likely to make medical errors (OR 1.34, 95%CI 1.05) (Mazurek-Melnyk et al., 2018).**

LITERATURE REVIEW

Resiliency in RNs measured during the Covid-19 pandemic was found to be moderate but varied widely with the country of practice (Baskin & Bartlett, 2021; Jo et al., 2021).

Jo et al. (2021) reported that RNs practicing in the United States reported greater resiliency ($p<.001$) than in other countries. However, **resiliency in this demographic also declined from pre-pandemic levels** (Baskin & Bartlett, 2021).

LITERATURE REVIEW

RNs also reported impacts on physical health during the Covid-19 pandemic **including symptoms such as headaches, diarrhea, muscle tension, and unwanted weight loss** (Häussl et al., 2021).

Mental Health was also significantly impacted. **Mental health sequelae reported by RNs included anxiety and depression** (Ali, Shah, Talib, 2021; Batra, Singh, Sharma, & Schwaneveldt, 2020; Sánchez- Sánchez et al., 2021; Witkoski Stimpfel, Ghazal, Goldsamt, Zhanay, & Vaughn Dickson, 2021), **Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)** (Batra et al., 2020; Honarmand et al., 2022), **insomnia, psychological distress, and burnout** (Ali et al., 2021; Batra et al., 2020)

LITERATURE REVIEW

Additional implications related to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on RNs **included turnover intention** (Falatah, 2021; Lin, Hu, Danaee, Alis, & Wong, 2021; Witkoski Stimpfel et al., 2021).

Witkoski Stimpfel et al. (2021) **reported that one in four (28%) nurses reported planning to leave their employer within the next year.**

Lin et al. (2021) **reported that of a sample of nursing students, 49.1% would choose a different career path and 45.4% often think of not going into nursing in the future.**

LITERATURE REVIEW

Resiliency in RNs was found to have a significant positive association with job satisfaction ($p < .001$) (Brown, Wey, & Foland, 2017) ($\beta = 0.694$; $p < .01$) (Zhao et al., 2021), **compassion satisfaction** ($r = 0.372$; $p < .01$) (Atay, Sahin, & Buzlu, 2021), and **social support** ($\beta = -0.355$, $p < .01$) (Zhao et al., 2021).

Resiliency was also found to be negatively correlated with burnout ($r = -0.379$; $p < .01$) and **compassion fatigue** ($r = -0.336$; $p < .01$) (Atay et al., 2021).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The impact of resiliency on mental health outcomes was found to include an inverse relationship to Covid-19 related stress ($r = -0.202, p < .001$) (Manzanares et al., 2021) and anxiety ($\beta = -0.152, p = 0.008$) (Labrague & De los Santos, 2020).

Resiliency was also found to have a protective effect against depression ($r = -0.268, p < .001$) (Manzanares et al., 2021) and burnout ($\beta = -0.132, p < .001$) and to partially mediate the relationship between personal burnout and depression ($\beta = -0.132, p < .001$) (Serrão, Durante, Castro, & Teixeira, 2021).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Little was found in the literature related to the impact of resiliency on RN physical health.

One study did report that resiliency partially mediated the impact of pandemic fatigue on sleep quality ($\beta = -0.326, p < .001$) (Labrague, 2021).

Resiliency was found to have an impact on physical health in other populations including trauma exposed military service members and veterans ($\beta = -0.42, p < .001$) (Sheerin et al, 2019) and older adults undergoing hip fracture surgery 95 % CI (0.71 – 1.59, $p < .001$) (Lim et al., 2019).

METHODS

IRB approval was obtained to conduct this exempt research through the Regional Medical Institutional Review Board.

A Qualtrics survey was used for data collection. An explanation of the study and informed consent was provided at the beginning of the survey. Participants were informed that they could stop at any time or not answer any question if they so desired.

METHODS

Resilience was assessed using the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC). The CD-RISC includes 25 items, and each item has 5-point Likert-type response options ranging from 0=not true at all to 4=true nearly all the time. Degree of resilience was reflected by the sum score of the 25 items, with higher scores reflecting greater resilience. The CD-RISC had high psychometric ratings with internal consistency estimated using Cronbach's α (0.89).

Self-perceived health status was assessed using the PROMIS Global Health short form v1.1 (PROMIS v1.1). The PROMIS v1.1 is a 10-item public available instrument that measures both Global Physical Health and Global Mental Health components. The estimated results were calculated based on a standardized and published scoring and rating system. The scale has internal consistency reliability coefficients of 0.81 and 0.86 for Global Physical Health and Global Mental Health measurements, respectively.

METHODS

The descriptive statistics of the pre-and post-survey respondents' characteristics and outcome measurements (i.e. resiliency score, physical and mental health scores) were presented and compared using frequency tables.

The independent two-sample t-tests were performed to compare the differences between the pre-and post-survey respondents for continuous variables (i.e. age, resiliency score, physical and mental health scores)

χ^2 tests were used for categorical variables.

A p-value <.05 was considered statistically significant. All data were analyzed using Stata/MP 14.0.

RESULTS

Table 1. Demographic Data and Nursing Experience Characteristics

Characteristics	Pre (N=79) n (%)	Post (N=126) n (%)	p value
Age in years (mean \pm SD)	44.13 \pm 13.1	42.98 \pm 12.28	.5236
Gender			.123
Female	75.0 (94.9%)	134.0 (98.5%)	
Male	4.0 (5.1%)	2.0 (1.5%)	
Race/ethnicity			--
Non-Hispanic White	79.0 (100.0%)	136.0 (100.0%)	
Highest nursing degree			.305
RN Diploma	0.0 (0.0%)	4.0 (2.9%)	
ADN	7.0 (8.9%)	18.0 (13.2%)	
BSN	57.0 (72.2%)	90.0 (68.4%)	
MSN or higher	15.0 (19.0%)	21.0 (15.4%)	
Work hours per week			.982
0 - 24 hours	9.0 (11.4%)	17.0 (12.5%)	
25 - 36 hours	25.0 (31.8%)	40.0 (29.4%)	
37 - 40 hours	43.0 (54.4%)	76.0 (55.9%)	
40+ hours	2.0 (2.5%)	3.0 (2.2%)	

RESULTS

Table 2. Resiliency Scores

Outcome measurements (mean ± SD)	Pre (N=79) n (%)	Post (N=136) n (%)	p value
Resiliency score	82.01 ± 11.71	78.33 ± 12.27	.0339

score reflecting greater resilience
 * US general population mean score= 80.7

* Higher

RESULTS

Table 3. Physical and Mental Health Resiliency Scores

Outcome measurements (mean ± SD)	Pre (N=79) n (%)	Post (N=136) n (%)	P value
Physical health score	50.06 ± 5.01	43.48 ± 5.44	<.0001
Mental health score	50.5 ± 7.89	48.16 ± 7.58	.0338

score reflects better physical or mental health
 * The mean score is 50 for both physical and mental health

* Higher

The raw Physical and Mental Health Scores were standardized to the general population using the T score. Analysis revealed a statistically significant decline in both Physical Health Scores (p <.0001) and Mental Health Scores (p = .03338).

DISCUSSION

• Mean resiliency scores for the study group declined significantly from a pre- Covid-19 mean of 82.01 +/- 11.71 to a post Covid-19 mean of 78.33 +/- 12.27 (p = 0.0339).

• This decline also brought the total resiliency score, for the group, below the U.S. general population mean of 80.7 another concerning change from the pre-Covid 19 data.

• While the literature did suggest that the Covid-19 pandemic was responsible for negative impacts on RN resiliency, (Baskin & Bartlett, 2021; Jo et al., 2021) minimal information was found that specifically addressed the nuance and reasons for this decline.

DISCUSSION

- The data analysis also revealed significant declines in both the physical and mental health domains of the study participants.
- The pre-pandemic physical health mean of 50.06 +/- 5.01 declined to a post-pandemic score of 43.48 +/- 5.44 ($p < .0001$).
- The pre-pandemic mental health mean of 50.5 +/- 7.89 declined to a post-pandemic score of 48.16 +/- 7.58 ($p = .0338$).
- The post-pandemic scores are both below the mean score of 50.

DISCUSSION

- Little information was found regarding specific factors that may have impacted the relationship between the Covid-19 pandemic and declines in RN physical and mental health.
- Several studies conducted pre-Covid-19 did find **associations between work environment related factors and nurses' physical and mental health** (Elbejjani et al., 2020; Mohamadirizi & Reza Dalvi, 2019). Specifically, Mohamadirizi & Reza Dalvi (2019) reported that **nurses who had sufficient work resources; related to working conditions, supervisor support, co-worker support, and emotional support; reported significantly better physical** ($r = 0.23$; $P, 0.001$) and **mental health** ($r = 0.17$; $P < 0.001$).

LIMITATIONS

- A small and heterogeneous sample with lack of gender and racial/ethnic diversity.
- Results of the analysis only reflect the levels of resiliency and mental and physical health of one rural, Magnet designated facility and therefore are not generalizable to the larger population of nurses.
- Pre and post-data groups were not identical.
- The small sample size prevented the conduct of inferential statistics aimed at investigating potential relationships between self-reported nursing experience characteristics and the endpoint outcomes of resiliency, physical health, and mental health.

ORGANIZATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

- Organizational leaders must give serious consideration to the results of this study.
- The implications for both RN outcomes, workplace, and patient outcomes related to the decline in RN resiliency, physical health, and mental health are clear.
- Resiliency in RNs was found to have a significant positive association with job satisfaction (Brown, Wey, & Foland, 2017; Zhao et al., 2021), compassion satisfaction (Atay, Sahin, & Buzlu, 2021), and social support (Zhao et al., 2021).
- Resiliency was also found to be negatively correlated with burnout and compassion fatigue (Atay et al., 2021). Finally, resiliency directly predicts transition shock and turnover intention (Zhao et al., 2021).

ORGANIZATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

- Henshall, Davey, and Jackson (2020) suggest that due to the high demand for nurses and the strains that the Covid-19 pandemic has put upon the RN workforce, organizations must look for ways to ensure the presence of a robust and resilient nursing workforce.
- While resilience is an inherently personal characteristic, organizations should seek to implement system level support mechanisms aimed at assisting nurses in maintaining and increasing personal levels of resiliency (Henshall et al., 2020).
- Rushton, Batcheller, Schroeder, and Donohue (2015) report that increased resiliency in nurses is associated with statistically significant improvements in both hope ($P < 0.01$) and stress ($p < 0.5$).

ORGANIZATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

- Organizational leaders should select evidence-based interventions that align with the organization's mission, vision, and values. Selected interventions should then be implemented to ensure that RNs have the organizational resources necessary to maintain and build resiliency (Henshall et al., 2020).
- Presentation of the interventions will be of the utmost importance (Henshall et al., 2020). Organizational leaders should approach these interventions carefully to ensure that RNs do not misinterpret the interventions to mean that the organization is placing judgment or criticism or perceives them as weak or unable to cope with challenges (Henshall et al., 2020).

ORGANIZATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

RNs need significant organizational support:

- To rebuild both personal and professional resources after enduring the Covid-19 pandemic and its associated challenges.

- Organizational leaders must step up to ensure that these needs are met in order to ensure a healthy and resilient RN workforce capable of meeting the ever-increasing demands of healthcare's future.

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