

**PATIENT RELATED FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO PREVALENCE OF WORKPLACE STRESS
AMONG HEALTH WORKERS OF MITYANA HOSPITAL, MITYANA DISTRICT ,
A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY**

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Abstract

Background

An estimated 59 million health workers worldwide are exposed to various health risks and hazards due to their unsafe working environment. The study aims to assess the patient-related factors contributing to the prevalence of workplace stress among health workers of Mityana hospital, Mityana district.

Methodology

The study adopted a cross-sectional descriptive and analytical survey design, employing both quantitative research approaches. Data was collected from 36 health workers at Mityana Hospital using a semi-structured questionnaire. Respondents were selected through simple random sampling.

Results

Most respondents 30 (83%) lived in urban areas, majority of the respondents' patients, 22 (61%), were abusive, most of the respondents, 19 (53%), rarely kept their patients' appointments, a large number of respondents, 24 (67%), reported that their patients' attitudes towards health workers were poor, while a smaller number, 12 (33%), reported that the attitudes were good.

Conclusion

Stress among health workers is also significantly influenced by patient behaviors. This includes frequent encounters with abusive patients, poor adherence to scheduled appointments, and negative attitudes towards health personnel, all of which exacerbate the stress experienced by these workers.

Recommendations

The hospital administration should foster a culture of open communication, appreciation, and teamwork within the hospital. This can involve leadership development programs and employee recognition initiatives. The hospital administration should develop a zero-tolerance policy for workplace abuse and establish clear reporting mechanisms for staff to address any incidents.

Keywords: Patient related factors contributing to prevalence of workplace stress among health workers of Mityana hospital, Mityana district.

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Background

An estimated number of 59 million health workers worldwide are exposed to various health risks and hazards as a result of their unsafe working environment (USWE) (Salilih & Abajobir, 2023). The majority of these problems are caused by psychosocial hazards (shift work, violence, and stress), as most health practitioners are regarded as healthy persons (Baye et al., 2020). In developing countries, the number of people suffering from work-related stress or worsening their condition as a result of stress is increasing at an alarming rate, and it is becoming a public health concern (Joseph et. al., 2021). Globally, the global

prevalence of workplace stress among health workers was reported to be around 9%–68%, varying across different countries and specialty sectors within healthcare institutions (WHO, 2022). The prevalence of workplace stress among health workers was 12%, 21%, 16%, and 19% in the USA, UK, Australia, and Jamaica, respectively. Workplace stress among health workers was more prevalent in low- and middle-income countries than in high-income countries, accounting for 67% (WHO, 2022). Different countries across the globe show different statistics of patient related causes of work stress where countries like USA showed abusive patients contributed to workplace stress among

health workers with 62% of health workers that had work place stress complained about abusive patients Findings from Ethiopia showed 63% of health workers that had work place stress nursed abusive patients (Adeolu et. al., 2020). In Uganda, 69% of health workers who had workplace stress nursed abusive patients (Rose et. al., 2021). The study aims to assess the patient-related factors contributing to the prevalence of workplace stress among health workers of Mityana hospital, Mityana district.

Methodology

Study design and rationale

The study was a cross-sectional study, centered on a descriptive and analytical survey, and interviews were conducted in depth, which involved quantitative research approaches. Data was collected from various respondents, and the ineffective collection used a triangular approach hence, the design was the most appropriate. Moreover, the design enabled the collection of all the data necessary at one point in time to be completed within a limited amount of time available for doing it.

Study setting and rationale

The study was conducted at Mityana Hospital, which is a government-owned Health facility under the management of the Ministry of Health (MoH). Mityana Hospital, also Mityana General Hospital or Mityana District Hospital, is a hospital in the town of Mityana, Mityana District in the Central Region of Uganda. Mityana Hospital is located in the central business district of the town of Mityana, about 85 kilometres (53 mi) east of Mubende Regional Referral Hospital. This is approximately 69 kilometres (43 mi) west of Mulago National Referral Hospital, the largest hospital in the country. It offers both curative and preventive services like Outpatient, Inpatient, Maternal and Child health care, including immunization, ANC- Health education, including a daily run clinic of ART. The main occupation in the district is farming. The study setting was selected because it had recorded cases of health workers with workplace stress, was within the researcher's jurisdiction, and was where the investigator had noted the research problem under study.

Study population and rationale

The study involved a total of 36 health workers at Mityana Hospital, Mityana District. A small number was selected for easy data collection. However, this number was slightly above the recommended sample size as per the research guideline provided by the Uganda Nurses and Midwives Examinations Board, 2009.

Sample size determination

The study involved a total of 36 health workers at Mityana Hospital, Mityana District. A small number was selected for easy data collection. However, this number was slightly

above the recommended sample size as per the research guidelines provided by the Uganda Nurses and Midwives Examinations Board in 2009.

Sampling procedure

A simple random type of sampling procedure was used to select the respondents for the study. Selected health workers of Mityana hospital, according to the Human Resource Registers, were chosen at random, and at least one participant from each was given a chance to participate in the study. This was achieved by getting pieces of paper on which the word "inclusion" meaning included in the study and "exclusion" meaning excluded from the study were written for the respondents to pick. Whoever picked the "inclusion" paper was given a questionnaire to fill out, whereas those who picked the "exclusion" paper were exempted from the study.

Inclusion criteria

The study included all health workers with workplace stress at Mityana hospital, Mityana District, who had voluntarily consented to participate in the study.

Dependent Variable was work place stress.

Independent variable was patient related factors

Research instruments

Data was collected using a semi-structured questionnaire, which consisted of open and closed-ended questions. The questionnaires had questions with options where the respondents chose what best suited them. The instrument was pretested at Kikandwa Health Center III among 5 health workers. The questionnaire was used because it enabled the respondents to respond efficiently to the questions that were asked.

Data collection procedure

Before administering the questionnaires, the researcher first explained the questions to the respondents. For those unable to read and write, questions were translated to them, and their responses were recorded in data. The procedure took 6 days, during which the researcher collected data from 6 respondents per day to obtain the required number of 36 respondents.

Data management

The filled questionnaires were collected, checked for completeness, and counted after every data collection day to ensure that they were all returned, coded, and kept in a safe place as a backup. A flash disk was also used to store data.

Data analysis and presentation

Data were manually analyzed and entered into a computer using Microsoft Word 2021. Then it was presented using tables and figures.

Ethical Considerations

An introductory letter was obtained from the Principal of Kampala University, introducing the researcher to the Research Committee of Mityana Hospital, to be allowed to

conduct the study. Once permission was granted, the Chairman of Research introduced the researcher to the respondents. Respondents were assured of maximum confidentiality for all the information that was given. The study only commenced after the study objectives had been clearly explained. Participants were asked to voluntarily consent to the study and were told about free entry and free exit when the need arose. Questionnaires were then administered to participants, filled out, and then later returned to the researcher, who kept them in the file.

Results

Socio-demographic characteristics

Table 1: Respondents socio-demographic characteristics (n=36)

Responses	Attributes	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Shows respondent's age.	20 - 30 years	24	67
	31- 45 years	07	19
	46 and above	05	14
	Total	36	100
Demonstrates respondent's residence.	Urban	30	83
	Rural	06	17
	Total	36	100
Illustrates respondent's marital status.	Married	08	22
	Single	22	61
	Divorced	06	17
	Total	36	100

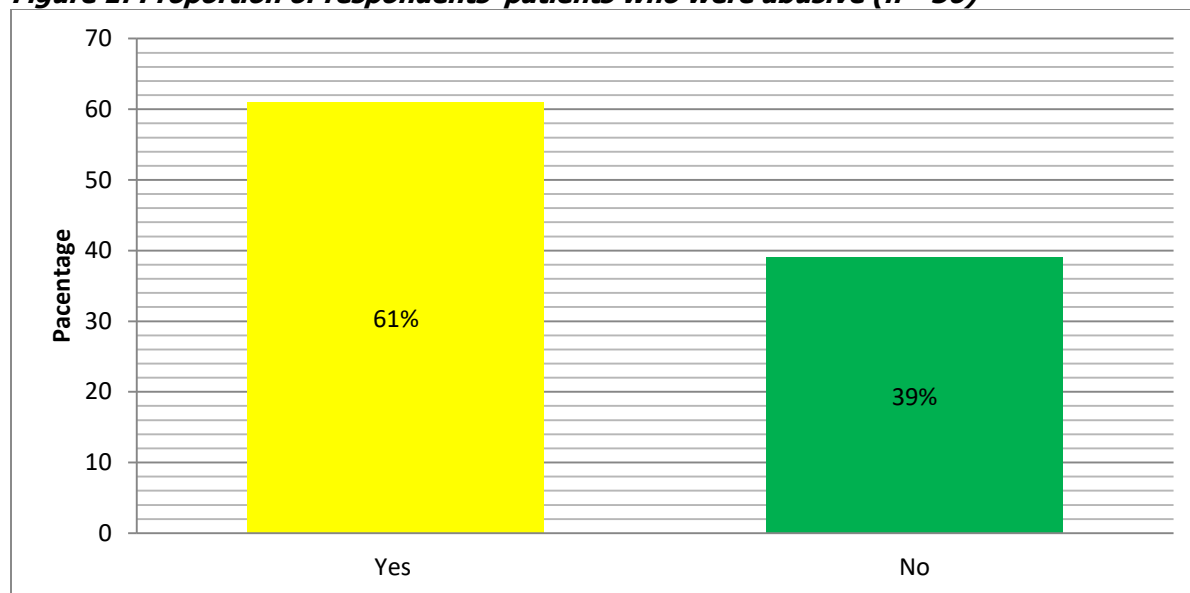
Source: Primary data, 2024.

Table 1, majority of the respondents 24 (67%) were aged 20-30years whereas the minority of the respondents 5 (14%) were aged 46years and above; furthermore, the vast of the respondents 30 (83%) lived in urban areas whereas the

pocket-sized of the respondents 6 (17%) lived rural areas; in addition, the enormous of the respondents 22 (61%) were single whereas the diminutive of the respondents 6 (17%) were divorced.

Patient related factors contributing to prevalence of workplace stress among health workers of Mityana hospital, Mityana district

Figure 1: Proportion of respondents' patients who were abusive (n =36)



Source: Primary data, 2024.

Figure 1: The majority of the respondents' patients, 22 (61%), were abusive, while a minority, 14 (39%), were not abusive.

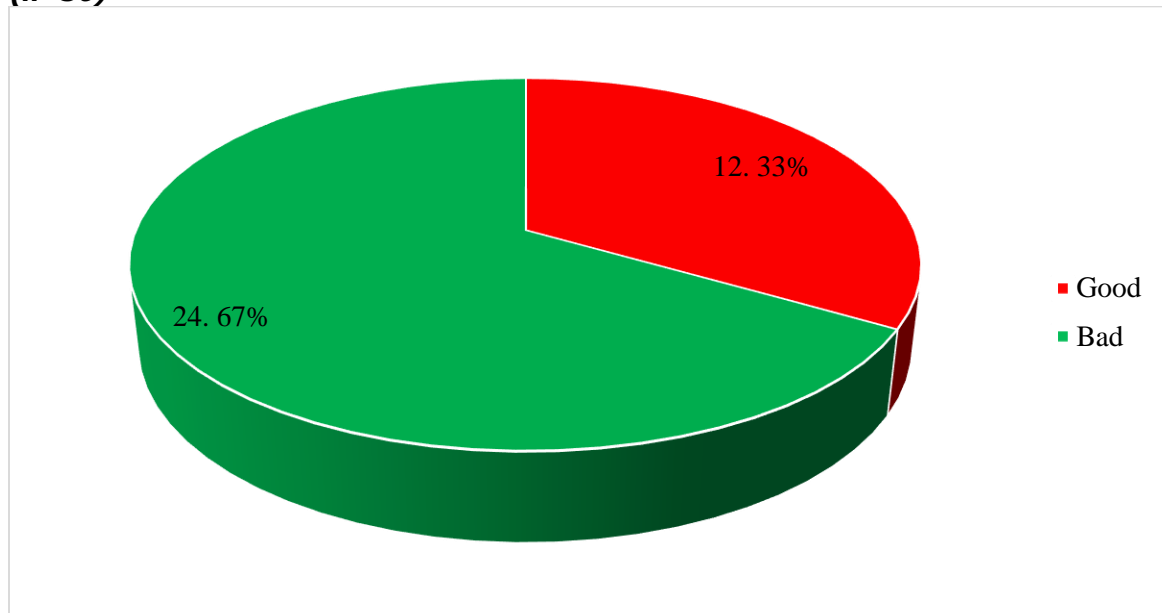
Table 2: Frequency with which respondents kept their patients' appointments (n=36)

Response	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Rarely	19	53
Always	08	22
Never	09	25
Total	36	100

Source: Primary data, 2024.

Table 2: Most of the respondents, 19 (53%), rarely kept their patients' appointments, whereas a smaller group, 8 (22%), always kept their appointments.

Figure 2: Respondents' perceptions of their patients' attitudes towards health workers (n=36)



Source: Primary data, 2024.

Figure 2: A large number of respondents, 24 (67%), reported that their patients' attitudes towards health workers were poor, while a smaller number, 12 (33%), reported that the attitudes were good.

Discussion

Patient related factors contributing to prevalence of workplace stress among health workers of Mityana hospital, Mityana district Patients' Abusive Behavior

The Majority of the respondents' patients, 22 (61%), were abusive, while a minority, 14 (39%), were not abusive. This finding suggests that the majority of health workers at Mityana Hospital are exposed to abusive patient behavior, which can be a significant source of workplace stress. Abusive behavior from patients can undermine the well-being and job satisfaction of health workers, potentially leading to burnout and a deterioration of the overall healthcare environment. This finding is consistent with the study by Adeolu et. al. (2020), in the USA, which revealed that abusive patients contributed to workplace stress among health workers.

Patients' Appointment Keeping

Most of the respondents, 19 (53%), rarely kept their patients' appointments, whereas a smaller group, 8 (22%), always kept their appointments. This finding indicates that the majority of patients at Mityana Hospital do not adhere to their scheduled appointments, which can disrupt the workflow and increase the workload for health workers. The

lack of patient commitment to appointments can contribute to the overall stress experienced by the health workers, as they may have to manage a more unpredictable and demanding work environment. This finding is in line with the study by Salilih et. al. (2023), in Ethiopia, which revealed that patients missing appointments contributed to workplace stress among health workers.

Patients' Attitudes towards Health Workers

A large number of respondents, 24 (67%), reported that their patients' attitudes towards health workers were poor, while a smaller number, 12 (33%), reported that the attitudes were good. This finding suggests that the majority of patients at Mityana Hospital have a negative perception of the health workers, which can create tensions and conflicts in the healthcare setting. Poor patient attitudes can undermine the trust and rapport between patients and health workers, exacerbating the stress experienced by the health professionals. This finding aligns with the study by Salilih et. al. (2023), in Ethiopia, which revealed that poor attitudes of patients towards health workers contributed to workplace stress among health workers.

These patient-related factors, including the prevalence of abusive patient behavior, the lack of patient commitment to appointments, and the poor attitudes of patients towards health workers, are significant contributors to the prevalence

of workplace stress among the health workers at Mityana Hospital.

Conclusion

Stress among health workers is also significantly influenced by patient behaviors. This includes frequent encounters with abusive patients, poor adherence to scheduled appointments, and negative attitudes towards health personnel, all of which exacerbate the stress experienced by these workers.

Recommendations

The hospital administration should foster a culture of open communication, appreciation, and teamwork within the hospital. This can involve leadership development programs and employee recognition initiatives.

The hospital administration should develop a zero-tolerance policy for workplace abuse and establish clear reporting mechanisms for staff to address any incidents.

Acknowledgement

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List of abbreviations

UK:	United Kingdom
USA:	United States of America
USWE:	Unsafe Working Environment
WHO:	World Health Organization

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The study was not funded

Conflict of interest

The author did not declare any conflict of interest

Author Biography

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