



# ASSESSMENT OF WORKPLACE ABUSE AMONG HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

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## ABSTRACT

Workplace abuse among health professionals is a significant issue that can have detrimental effects on the wellbeing and performance of individual working in the health care sector. It encompasses physical, verbal, sexual abuse. This study aimed to assess work place abuse among health professionals. The objectives of the study were to assess work place abuse among health professionals and to find out the association between work place abuse and selected Socio demographic variables. A quantitative research approach was used for the study. A sample of 150 health professionals were selected by using non probability stratified random sampling technique. The study was conducted at MGM Muthoot Health Care PVT Ltd, Kozhencherry. Work place abuse are assessed by using a checklist consist of questions including physical abuse, verbal abuse, verbal thread, sexual abuse and selected socio demographic variables. Distribution of Work place abuse revealed that 55.33% of samples were having mild abuse, 43.33% of samples were having moderate abuse and 3.33% of samples were having severe abuse. Chi square analysis showed that there was a significant association between the work place abuse among the health professionals with selected Socio demographic variables like profession ( $\chi^2=19.954$ ), and department ( $\chi^2=58.27$ ), at  $p < 0.05$  level. This study recommends that assessment of work place abuse helps in developing prevention strategies and helps in minimizing work place abuse.

**Keywords :** Assess; workplace abuse, health professionals.

## INTRODUCTION

### BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Health professionals maintain health in humans through the application of the principles and procedures of evidence-based medicine and caring. Health professionals study, diagnose, treat and prevent human illness, injury and other physical and mental impairments in accordance with the needs of the populations they serve.

The various forms of abuse includes verbal abuse, physical abuse, sexual harassment, bullying and emotional manipulation. The overall prevalence of work place abuse is between 8% and 38 among health workers and high is Asian countries 51% in Pakistan ,62% in china and 63% in India .An analysis of report suggests that 96% of reported cases were physical abuse.

According to a meta analysis of 47 observational studies, the overall prevalence of work place violence against health care professionals was 62.4% with verbal abuse accounting for the highest majority 61.2% followed by psychological violence 50.8%, threats 39.5%, physical violence 13.7% sexual harassment 6.3% Even though some institutions may have a proper format incident reporting system, there are still many incidents especially in forms of bullying, verbal abuse and harassment unreported. Occupational Safety and health administration (OSHA) defines workplace violence as any act or threat of physical violence,sexual harassment , intimidation or other threatening disruptive behavior that occurs at work. Workplace abuse has significant consequences for the well-being and professional performance of health professionals. It can lead to increased level of stress, burn out, job dissatisfaction and turnover intentions. Furthermore, abused health care professionals may experience emotional distress, decreased productivity and compromised patient care quality. This study aims to gather empirical data and insights to understand the extent and nature of workplace abuse experienced by health care professionals in specific hospital settings.

## NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Violence affects people at all levels of society and can occur anywhere at home, on the street, in school, workplace, and institutions. Violence is determined by the World Health Organization as the deliberate use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against a group or community that has consequences or has a high probability of resulting in injury, death, mental distress, mal-development or deprivation.

This study aims to identify the contributing factors that leads to workplace abuse in selected hospitals. This knowledge can help organizations understand the underlying causes and risk factors associated with work place abuse. Work place abuse has a

significant impact on the well being and job satisfaction of health care professionals. By assessing the effects of abuse on health professionals, mental health, job satisfaction, overall well-being and addressing importance of psychological and emotional wellbeing of them. This in turn can lead to increased job satisfaction, motivation and retention.

The incident of brutal stabbing of Dr.Vandhana Das, house surgeon doing her internship at Kottarakara taluk hospital, Kollam district, by the hands of a patient has brought into sharp focus a confluence of several struggling public health indicators in the state including work place abuse, abuse against women, and priorities in government funding and resources for the healthcare sector. It is reported that the attacker was an alcoholic. Dr.Vandhana Das's murder is a wake-up call for the state government to correct an issue in the public health care system .

## STATEMENT OF THE STUDY

A descriptive study to assess work place abuse among health professionals in selected hospital of Pathanamthitta District, Kerala.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. Assess workplace abuse among health professionals.
2. Find out the association between workplace abuse among health professionals and selected demographic variables.

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITION

1. **Assess:** Refers to identification of work place abuse among health professionals.
2. **Work place abuse:** Defined as any harmful, disrespectful or inappropriate behavior that occurs within the health care setting that target health professionals.
3. **Health professionals:** Refers to individuals employed in various health care sector including doctors, nurses and paramedical staff like lab technician, dialysis technician, radiology technician, endoscopy technicians, dietitian, ECG and pharmacist.

## ASSUMPTIONS

Work place abuse lead to stress and job dissatisfaction. Work place abuse may cause emotional distress, decreased productivity, and compromised patient care.

## RESEARCH APPROACH

Research approach involves the description of plan to investigate the phenomenon under study in a structured (quantitative), unstructured (qualitative) or a combination of the two methods (quantitative-qualitative integrated approach. In this **Quantitative research approach** was used.

## RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is the overall plan for addressing a research question, including specification for enhancing the study's integrity. In this study, **Descriptive Non-Experimental Design** was used.

## POPULATION

The population in this study were health professionals in selected hospital in Pathanamthitta district.

## SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

**Sample :** Health professionals of Muthoot Health Care Pvt Ltd, Kozhencherry.

**Sample size:** 150 health professionals

**Sampling technique:**Non- probability stratified random sampling technique.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE TOOL

The tool consists of two sections.

Section A: Socio demographic variables.

The socio demographic variables include age, gender, profession, year of experience, working department, marital status and education. 29

Section B : Checklist for assessing the workplace abuse.

The Checklist consists of 14 items. It is a self prepared checklist to assess the workplace abuse. The score grading include:-  
Mild abuse : 0 – 5

Moderate abuse : 6 – 11

Severe abuse : 12 – 17

## CONTENT VALIDITY

Content validity refers to the degree in which items of Instruments adequately represent the universe of content for the consent being measured. It is considered with score of coverage of content area to be measured. The prepared instrument along with the statement of problem, objectives, operational definitions, checklist and criteria for validation. The tools were submitted to experts from Medical Surgical Nursing, Child Health Nursing, Obstetrics and Gynaecological Nursing, Mental Health Nursing and Community Health Nursing department. The suggestions and recommendations given by experts were accepted and necessary modifications were done.

## DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

Data collection is gathering the address of a research problem. Data collection was done on 15- 08-2023 at the Muthoot Health Care pvt Ltd, Kozhencherry. After obtaining ethical clearance and permission from the concerned authorities. The samples were collected by non probability stratified random sampling. The study was conducted among the health professionals of selected hospital Pathanamthitta district. Prior written consent was taken from selected samples. The investigators introduced themselves to samples and explain the purpose of the study. Tool was given to samples and data were collected to assess the workplace abuse. Confidentiality was maintained throughout the study.

## PLAN FOR DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is the technique used to reduce, organize and give meaning to the data. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for analysis. Frequency and percentage distributions were used to analyze the selected socio demographic variables. Chisquare test were used to find out the association between workplace abuse with the selected socio demographic variables.

## FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

**Section 1:** Description of demographic variables of health professionals.

With reference to age 33.33% samples were within the age group of 20- 30 years, 48% samples were within the age group of 31-40 years, 14.67% samples were within the age group of 41-50 years and 4% samples were within the age group of above 50 years. With reference to gender 20.67% of samples were male, 79.33% of samples were female and 0% of samples were transgender. With reference to profession 19.33% of samples were doctors, 65.33% of samples were nurses, 4% of samples were lab technicians, 2% of samples were X-ray, CT, MRI technicians, 4.67% of samples were pharmacist, 0.67% of samples were physiotherapist, social worker, ECG technician, 1.33% of samples were dialysis technician and 0.67% of samples were dietician and endoscopy technician.

With reference to year of experience 22% of samples were within 1-3 years of experience, 32.67% of samples were within 4-6 years of experience, 24% of samples were within 7-9 years of experience and 21.33% of samples were within more than 10 years of experience.

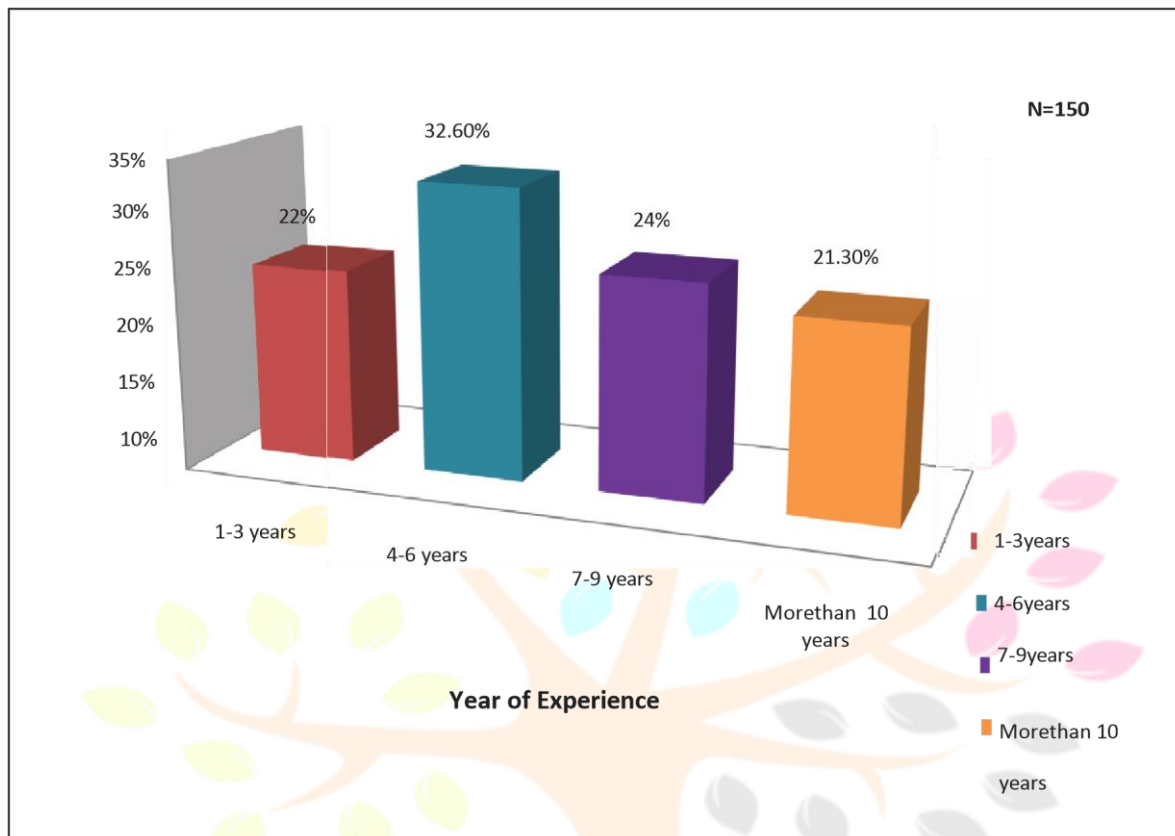
With reference to working department 7.33% of samples were working in emergency unit, 8.67% of samples were working in OPD, 49.33% of samples were working in ward, 20% of samples were working in ICU, 4.67% of samples were working in pharmacy, 4% of samples were working in laboratory, 0.67% of samples were working in X-ray, CT, MRI, 3.33% of samples were working in dialysis and 2% of samples were working in endoscopy department.

With reference to marital status 16.66% of samples were single; 82.67% of samples were married and 0.67% of samples were separated.

With reference to education 16 % of samples have diploma; 61.33 % of samples were graduates; 22.67% of samples were post – graduates and 0 % of samples have doctorate.

**Section 2:** Association between workplace abuse among health professionals and socio demographic variables.

The chi-square value for profession ( $\chi^2 = 81.954$ ) at  $p < 0.05$  were greater than the table value, working department ( $\chi^2 = 58.27$ ) at  $p < 0.05$  were greater than the table value ;so there was a significant association between workplace abuse and the selected socio demographic variables like profession and working department



Distribution of health professionals according to the year of experience depicts that 22% of samples were within 1-3 years of experience, 32.67% of samples were within 4-6 years of experience, 24% of samples were within 7-9 years of experience and 21.33% of samples were within more than 10 years of experience.

Distribution of health professionals according to working department

N=150		
Working department	Frequency	%
a) Emergency unit	11	7.33
b) OPD	13	8.67
c) Ward	74	49.33
d) ICU	30	20
e) Pharmacy	7	4.67
f) Laboratory	6	4
g) X-ray ,CT,MRI	1	0.67
h) Dialysis	5	3.33
i) Endoscopy	3	2

The data presented in the Table 4 depicts that 7.33% of samples of working in emergency unit, 8.67% of samples were working in OPD, 49.33% of samples were working inward, 20% of samples were working in ICU, 4.67% of samples were working in pharmacy, 4% of samples were working in laboratory, 0.67% of samples were working in X-ray, CT, MRI, 3.33% of samples were working in dialysis and 2% of samples were working in endoscopy department.



## NURSING IMPLICATIONS

The findings of the present study generate some implications to the health care delivery system. It has implications in nursing practice, nursing administration, nursing education and nursing research.

### Nursing practice

1. Nurses can understand the prevalence and types of workplace abuse.
2. Nurse can increase the need of awareness of workplace abuse.
3. Nurses can understand the factors that contribute workplace abuse.
4. Nurse can understand the impact and consequences of workplace abuse.
5. Nurse can develop prevention strategies against workplace abuse.

### Nursing administration

1. Nurse administrator can play a lead role in preventing the workplace abuse among health professionals.
2. They can incorporate the research evidences obtained, while assessing the problems associated with workplace abuse.

### Nursing education

1. The nurses can also act as a educator by educating the co-workers.
2. The nurse educator should focus on the needs of patients, along with the practicesections.
3. The awareness of student nurses, regarding the prevention of workplace abuse should be improved by conducting webinar and orientation programs.

### Nursing research

1. There is a need for an extensive and intensive research in this area in order to assess the severity of workplace abuse and develop prevention strategies against it.
2. The present study may inspire other researchers for conducting the studies in 66 the same area
3. Researchers can do studies related to various forms of workplace abuse

## CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

The aim of the present study was to assess the workplace abuse among health professionals in selected hospitals of Pathanamthitta district. A quantitative approach with non - experimental research design was used in this study. Non – probability stratified sampling technique was used to select 150 samples. The data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics inform of frequencies, percentage and using Chi Square.

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