The Impact of Nurse Mental Health on Patient Outcomes: Quality Improvement Project

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NURB 361 Introduction to Nursing Research, Baccalaureate Nursing Program

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Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being.

INTRODUCTION

The mental health of nurses has a significant impact on the care they provide to patients. When nurses experience high levels of depression, anxiety, or stress, it can affect their ability to make sound clinical decisions, communicate effectively with patients and colleagues, and provide compassionate care (1). Research has shown that nurses experiencing mental health issues are more likely to report making errors, experiencing burnout, and having low job satisfaction (2). High levels of stress can lead to increased absenteeism and turn over, which can negatively impact patient care continuity (3).

OBJECTIVE:
This project aims to investigate the correlation between the practicing nurse's feelings of depression/anxiety/stress and the quality of care provided by the nurse.
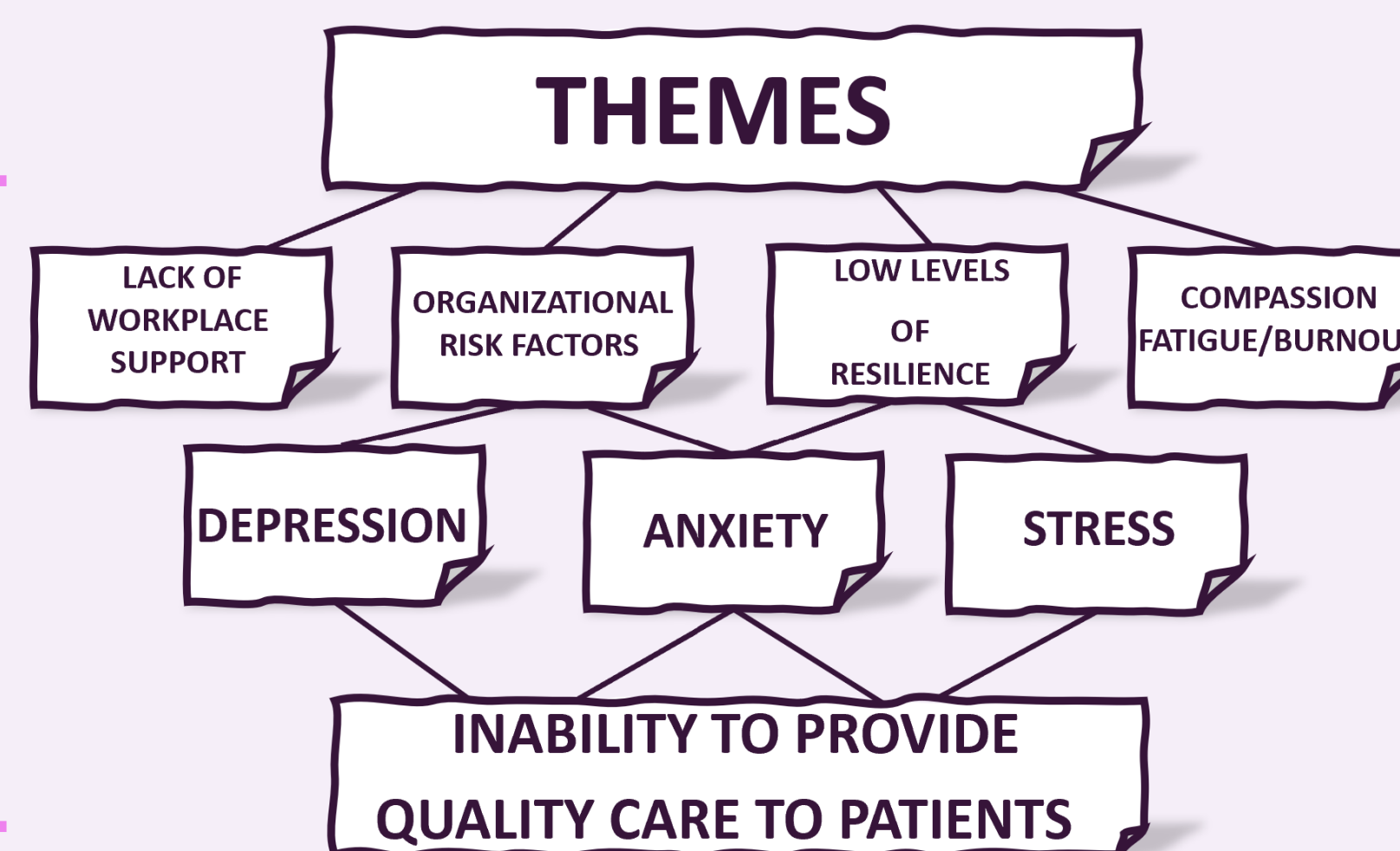
LITERATURE REVIEW

40 STUDIES WERE REVIEWED

9 QUANTITATIVE

21 QUALITATIVE

10 MIXED

THEMES

LACK OF WORKPLACE SUPPORT · ORGANIZATIONAL RISK FACTORS · LOW LEVELS OF RESILIENCE · COMPASSION FATIGUE/BURNOUT

DEPRESSION · ANXIETY · STRESS

INABILITY TO PROVIDE QUALITY CARE TO PATIENTS

METHODOLOGY

- Primary research was chosen to complement pre-existing literature on the topic of nurse mental health. The design was quantitative and of the descriptive and quasi-experimental strategy.
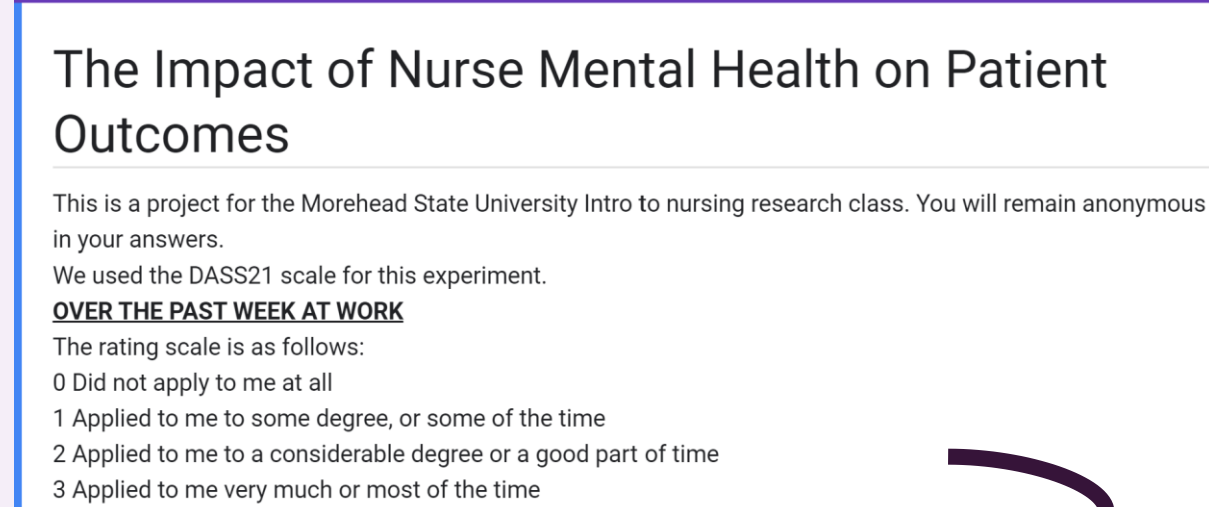
DATASET
Used cross-sectional data on a convenience sample of 37 nurses all working at medical centers providing clinical opportunities to Morehead State University nursing students.
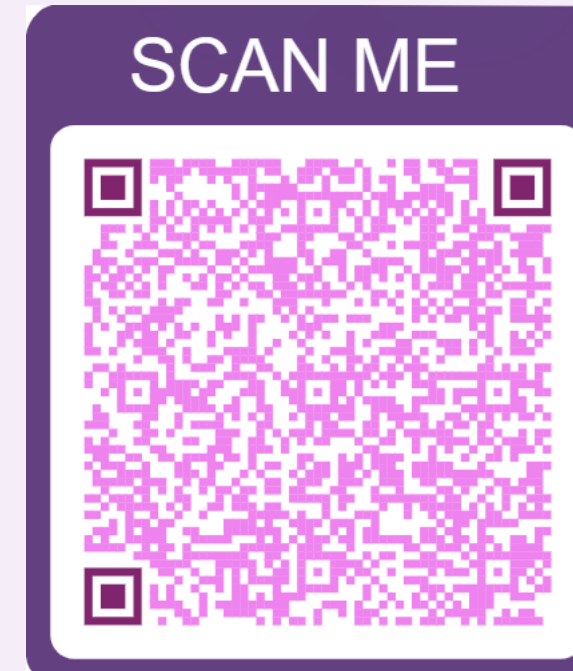
DATA COLLECTION
The research analyzes data from the group's developed survey. The instrument used to identify depression, anxiety, and stress among practicing nurses was the Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale (DASS-21) by Lovibond and Lovibond and demonstrated internal reliability.
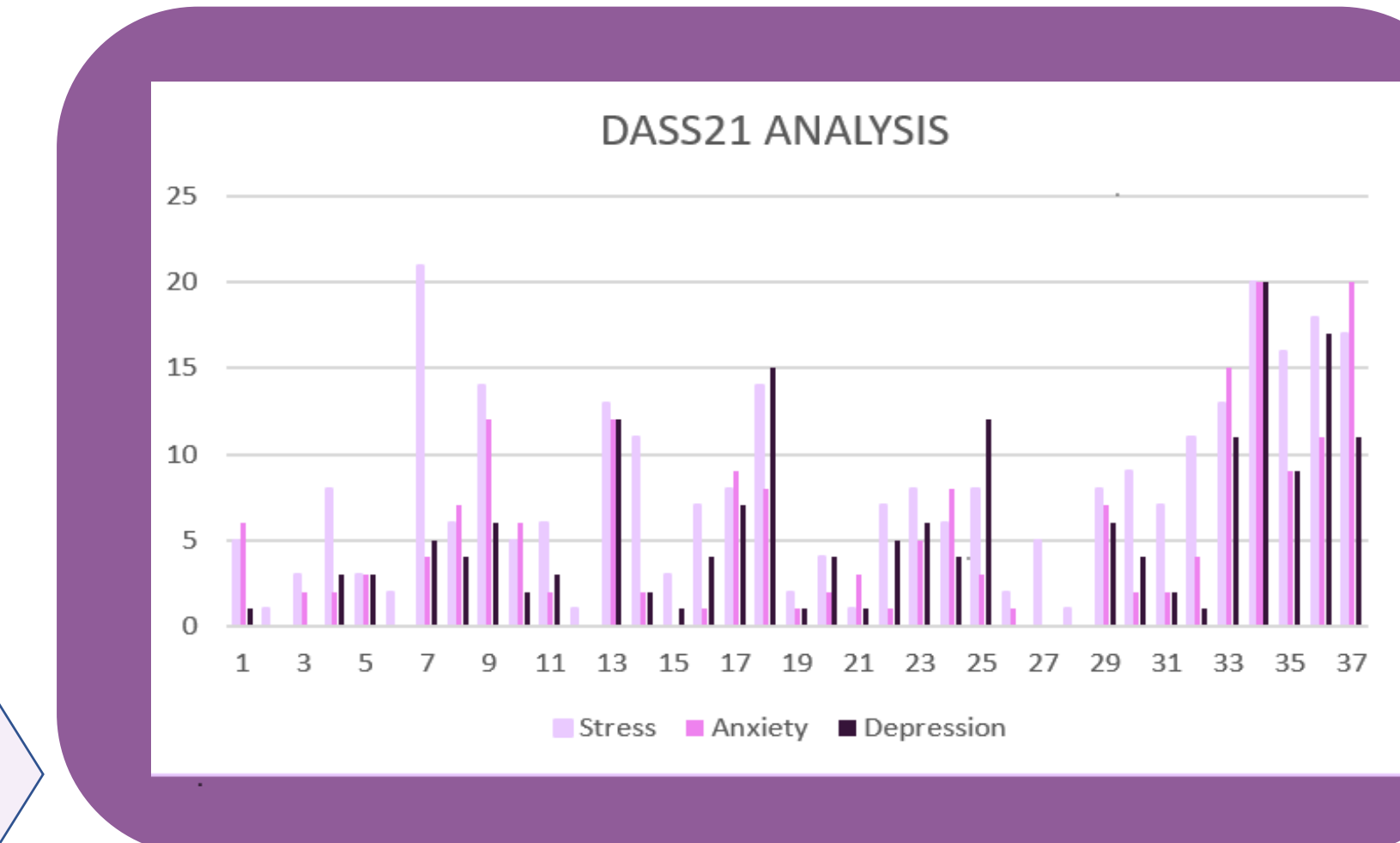
Administer Survey

The Impact of Nurse Mental Health on Patient Outcomes

This is a project for the Morehead State University Intro to nursing research class. You will remain anonymous in your answers.
We used the DASS21 scale for this experiment.
OVER THE PAST WEEK AT WORK
The rating scale is as follows:
0 Did not apply to me at all
1 Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time
2 Applied to me to a considerable degree or a good part of time
3 Applied to me very much or most of the time

SCAN ME

DASS21 SCORING

	Depression	Anxiety	Stress
Normal	0-9	0-7	0-14
Mild	10-13	8-9	15-18
Moderate	14-20	10-14	19-25
Severe	21-27	15-19	26-33
Extremely Severe	28+	20+	34+

FINDINGS

The respondents' feedback shows a correlation between nurse mental health on patient outcomes. This result is shown with the existing graphs below.
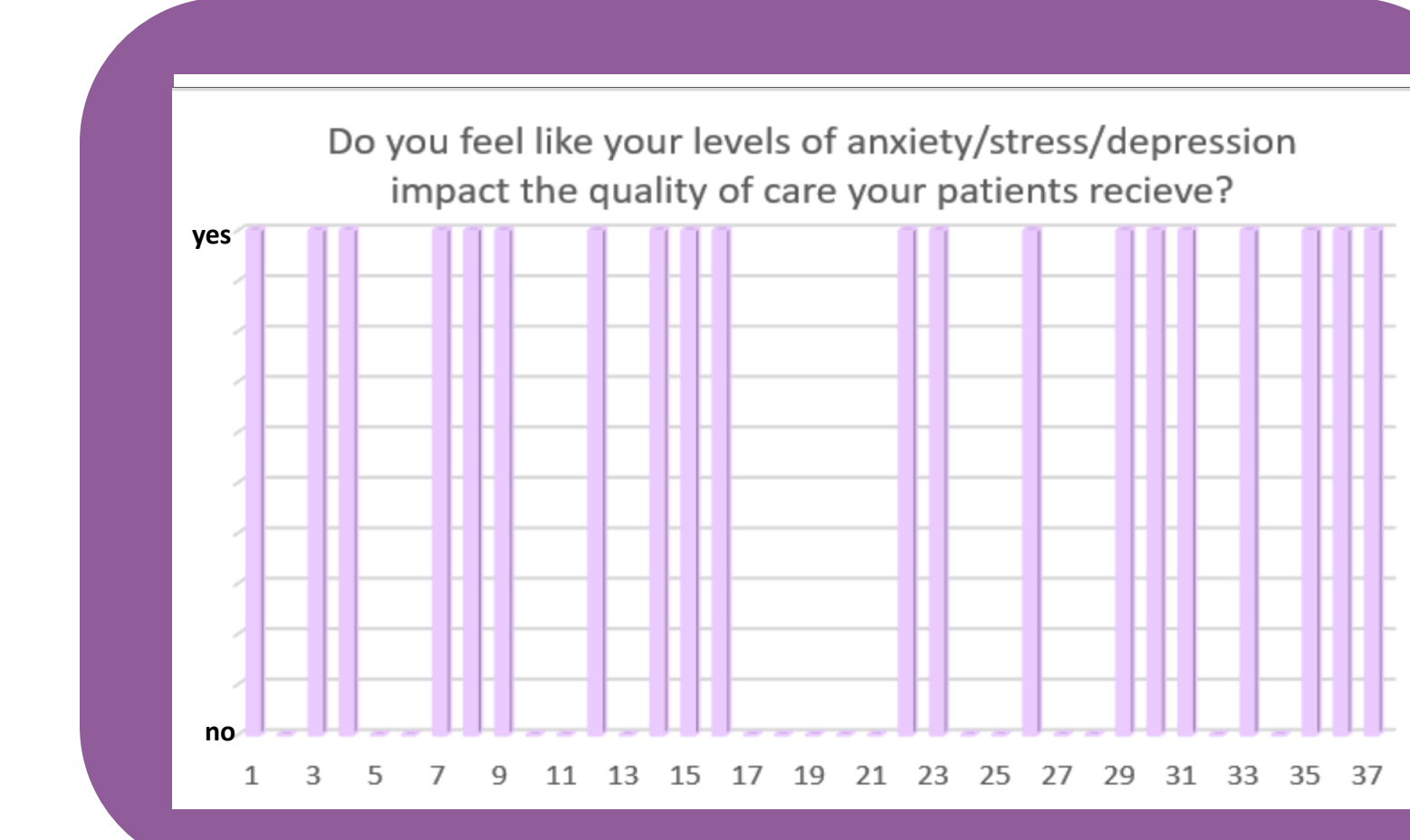
DASS21 ANALYSIS
Stress · Anxiety · Depression

75% Reported feeling depressed.

83.7% Reported feeling anxious.

100% Reported feeling stressed.

Initially, the survey was emailed to clinical instructors and professors at Morehead State University. The survey was then dispersed by these individuals to floor nurses working within their specialty. The provided graph above shows levels of depression and anxiety to be lower among individuals having higher levels of education.

Do you feel like your levels of anxiety/stress/depression impact the quality of care your patients recieve?

54.1% said yes

45.9% said no

In addition to the DASS21, there was a question regarding improvement of care and reduction of anxiety/stress/depression. The answers were congruent with the themes found throughout the literature review: adequate staffing, nurse patient ratio, support from management, and better communication among the departments.

CLINICAL IMPLICATIONS

The conducted research implies that a nurse's levels of depression, anxiety, and stress could impact the ability of the nurse to provide adequate care to patients thus lowering succession of patient outcomes.

Recommendation: Medical facilities should take into consideration organizational factors such as staffing, available support, and time restraints and their possible effects on the mental well-being of employed nurses. Implementing change in reference to reported factors may be beneficial for patient outcomes.

DISCUSSION

An occupational risk that affects nurses, patients, organizations, and society at large is poor mental health among nurses. From the research conducted, many emerging themes appear, all relating closely to the levels of depression, stress, and anxiety experienced by the nurse. A strong correlation can be observed between reported mental status and abilities to provide adequate care. Reframing mental health as an organizational and communal issue provides the larger perspective required to address the mental health among nurses. If the study were to be continued many changes would be implemented: assessment of education level, age, relations (familial, platonic, romantic).

REFERENCES

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