Consequences of Workplace Bullying from the Perspective of Nurses Working in Pediatric Intensive Care Units: A Conventional Content Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Bullying is a major stressor for nurses and is more prevalent in high-stress work environments such as intensive care units (ICUs). Identifying the consequences of bullying enhances our understanding of This phenomenon and contributes to creating a healthy work environment for nurses and reducing their stress levels. This issue becomes particularly important in pediatric ICUs due to the increased vulnerability of patients and their special care needs. Therefore, this study aimed to explore the consequences of bullying in pediatric ICUs.

Methods and Materials: This study employed a qualitative approach using a conventional content analysis method. The participants were 11 nurses working in the ICUs of Children's Medical Center and Bahrami hospitals. Purposive sampling was used to select participants. Data were collected through face-to-face semi-structured interviews. Data collection continued until data saturation was reached. The five-step approach of Granheim and Lundman was used for data analysis. To ensure the validity and rigor of the data, the four Lincoln and Guba criteria of credibility, confirmability, dependability, and transferability were employed.

Results: Data analysis resulted in the identification of 188 codes. After merging similar codes, the number of codes was reduced to 123. Finally, three main themes emerged: negative effects on the nurse (threat to physical health, harm to mental health, and decline in job performance), negative effects on the organization (increased turnover intent, widespread job dissatisfaction, and poisoning of the organizational climate), and negative effects on the patient (distraction from the patient and increased incidence of errors and adverse events).

Conclusion and Discussion: Our findings indicate that workplace bullying has negative effects on nurses' physical, mental, and occupational health. Bullying significantly harms the organizational climate, leading to increased job dissatisfaction and turnover intentions among nurses. Bullying diverts nurses' attention away from patients, resulting in an increased incidence of errors and adverse events.

Keywords: Intensive Care Unit, Nurse, Pediatric, Workplace Bullying