

Occupational Health Nursing: Basis for Wellness Programs for A Healthier Work Environment

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Abstract

This study assessed Occupational Health Nursing (OHN) services as a basis for developing wellness programs that promote a healthier work environment in selected hospitals in Manila. Using a quantitative descriptive-correlational design, data were collected from 124 Occupational Health Nurses through a structured survey questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive and correlational statistics. The respondents were predominantly young, female, single, and college-educated nurses. Results showed that OHN services—including health assessment and monitoring, health promotion and disease prevention, safety management, counseling, and management of work-related illness and injury—were implemented at a very high level. Similarly, workplace wellness programs in physical, mental and emotional, social, occupational, and environmental aspects were rated highly, indicating effective implementation. Findings also revealed a significant relationship between OHN services and workplace wellness programs, highlighting the role of occupational health nurses in promoting employee well-being. The study concludes that strengthening OHN services can further enhance workplace wellness and organizational health outcomes.

Keywords: Occupational Health Nursing, workplace wellness programs, healthier work environment, employee well-being, health promotion, occupational health services

INTRODUCTION

The contemporary workplace continues to face growing problems associated with work-related stress, occupational hazards, illnesses, and reduced productivity. Recent studies also report increasing burnout among healthcare workers due to rapid workplace changes and post-pandemic challenges (Aziz & Ong, 2024; Delclós et al., 2022). The integration of mental health into occupational safety has been identified as a global priority (WHO & ILO, 2022), while workplace wellness programs have been shown to reduce absenteeism and improve productivity. However, gaps remain in funding, training, and organizational support for Occupational Health Nurses (Argañosa & Bingham, 2023). Overall, these issues highlight the increasing need for proactive Occupational Health Nursing (OHN) interventions that prioritize prevention, mental health care, and overall employee well-being.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to assess occupational health nursing as a basis for developing wellness programs for a healthier work environment.

Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of:
 - 1.1 age
 - 1.2 sex
 - 1.3 civil status
 - 1.4 highest educational attainment
 - 1.5 length of service
 - 1.6 employment status
2. What is the level of occupational health nursing services in terms of:
 - 2.1 health assessment and monitoring
 - 2.2 health promotion and disease prevention
 - 2.3 safety management and risk reduction
 - 2.4 counseling and employee support
 - 2.5 management of work-related illness and injury
3. What is the level of workplace wellness programs in terms of:
 - 3.1 physical wellness
 - 3.2 mental and emotional wellness
 - 3.3 social wellness
 - 3.4 occupational wellness
 - 3.5 environmental wellness
4. What are the common problems encountered in the workplace in relation to health and wellness?
5. Is there a significant relationship between occupational health nursing services and workplace wellness programs?
6. Is there a significant difference in the level of occupational health nursing services when grouped according to the respondents' profile?
7. Based on the findings of the study, what wellness program may be proposed to promote a healthier work environment?

Scope and Delimitations

This study focused on Occupational Health Nurses (OHNs) actively engaged in implementing and developing workplace wellness programs in selected public and private healthcare institutions. It aims to examine their roles and contributions in promoting employee well-being and fostering a healthy work environment. The study is limited to practicing OHNs who are directly involved in wellness program implementation, while those who are not actively practicing or not engaged in such programs are excluded. Hence, the findings are limited to the selected participants and may not be generalized to all Occupational Health Nurses in other settings

Review of Related Literature

This section presents literature on workplace wellness programs, occupational stress, and Occupational Health Nursing (OHN) practices. Studies consistently show that workplace wellness and safety programs improve employee engagement, productivity, and overall well-being (Omolara, 2024; Marin-Farrona et al., 2023). Leadership support plays a crucial role in the successful implementation of wellness initiatives, as it encourages participation and

strengthens program outcomes among healthcare workers (Allan et al., 2023). However, nurses continue to experience high levels of stress and burnout, especially during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting the need for stronger institutional and policy support for their well-being (Flaubert et al., 2021).

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in Neuman's Systems Model, Nightingale's Environmental Theory, and Pender's Health Promotion Model, which collectively emphasize prevention, healthy work environments, and health-promoting behaviors in Occupational Health Nursing. These theories support the development of nurse-led wellness programs aimed at reducing workplace stressors, improving environmental conditions, and promoting positive health behaviors among employees. The study is further guided by the Input-Process-Output (IPO) model in analyzing factors influencing program implementation and outcomes.

Conceptual Framework

The study is anchored on the Input–Process–Output (IPO) model, which provides a systematic framework for analyzing the role of Occupational Health Nurses (OHNs) in developing workplace wellness programs. The Input includes the demographic profile of OHNs and the challenges they encounter, such as resource limitations, work culture, and training needs. The Process involves data collection through structured surveys and statistical analysis to determine relationships among variables. The Output is the development of a comprehensive OHN-led wellness program aimed at improving employee well-being, engagement, and productivity in healthcare settings.

METHODOLOGY

This quantitative descriptive-correlational comparative study examined the role of Occupational Health Nurses (OHNs) in implementing workplace wellness programs in selected hospitals in Manila.

Research Design

The study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational comparative design to determine the relationship between occupational health nursing services and workplace wellness programs, as well as differences based on respondents' demographic characteristics. A structured questionnaire was used to gather data from selected OHNs.

Research Steps

This study began with a review of related literature to establish a foundation on occupational health nursing and workplace wellness programs. The research design was then developed in line with the study objectives. Data were collected using structured questionnaires distributed to OHNs in selected hospitals in Manila and through online surveys via Google Forms.

Data Collection and Sample Selection

Data were gathered from Occupational Health Nurses working in selected public and private hospitals in Manila. Using Slovin's formula, 124 respondents were selected from an estimated population of 180 OHNs. Purposive sampling was used to include registered OHNs with at least six months of experience and involvement in occupational health or wellness programs. Participation was voluntary and based on informed consent.

Data Analysis Methods

Data were analyzed using SPSS and Excel. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used. Pearson correlation was used to determine relationships between variables at a 0.05 level of significance. Reliability was tested using Cronbach's alpha.

Research Hypotheses and Validation

The study tested the hypothesis that occupational health nursing services are significantly related to workplace wellness program implementation. Results were validated through statistical analysis of survey responses on OHN services, wellness program implementation, and demographic variables.

Study Limitations and Ethical Considerations

The study is limited to selected OHNs in Manila and may not be generalizable to other settings. Ethical approval was obtained prior to data collection. Informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, voluntary participation, and the right to withdraw were strictly observed in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Occupational health nursing services in the workplace are perceived to be at a very high level, as indicated by consistently high mean scores and a verbal interpretation of "Strongly Agree" across all indicators. This suggests that health assessment and monitoring, health promotion and disease prevention, safety management and risk reduction, counseling and employee support, and management of work-related illness and injury are effectively implemented. Overall, the findings indicate that occupational health nursing services are well-established and contribute to maintaining a safe and healthy work environment.

SUMMARY

OHN services were rated highly across key areas, indicating effective delivery of workplace health and wellness support. However, employees still reported issues such as stress, fatigue, work-life imbalance, poor communication, and lack of emotional support.

CONCLUSIONS

Occupational Health Nursing services are generally effective and significantly contribute to workplace wellness programs. However, workplace issues still persist, showing that existing services are not fully sufficient to address all employee concerns.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Strengthen OHN services, especially counseling, safety management, and health monitoring. Improve work-life balance strategies, communication, and emotional support. Continuously evaluate wellness programs to better address employee needs.

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AI DECLARATION STATEMENT:

The researchers declare that this study was completed with the assistance of AI tools for language refinement and editing support. All ideas, data, and analysis remain the work of the researchers, and proper academic integrity was observed throughout the research process.

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