Workplace violence against nurses working in emergency departments in Saudi Arabia: a cross-sectional study

Fuaad Ali Alshehri

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In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful
Declaration

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Signature: Fuaad Alshehri

Date: December 2016
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Abstract

**Aim:** The aim of this study was to assess the prevalence, types and contributing factors of violence against nurses in emergency departments.

**Background:** Violence against health care workers, especially nurses is a significant concern for healthcare internationally. Emergency departments are considered high-risk areas in hospitals. Violence against nurses in EDs is a serious issue that cannot be ignored.

**Method:** A cross-sectional study design was conducted from June to August 2016 using convenience sample of emergency nurses in four major hospitals in Riyadh City in Saudi Arabia. The questionnaire was adapted from Kitaneh and Hamdan (2012). Chi-Square test was used to analyse the data.

**Results:** Four hundred and thirty-six emergency nurses responded to the questionnaire (a response rate of 71.2%). The results showed 41.7% of respondents were exposed to both physical and non-physical violence in the workplace during the previous 12 months. The results showed that 44.7% of respondents were exposed to physical assault, 29.5% of respondents were exposed to threat, 88.1% of respondents were exposed to verbal abuse and 4.4% of respondents were exposed to sexual harassment in the last 12 months. Patients (67.7%) were identified as the most common perpetrators of physical violence, and visitors and patients’ relatives (67.1%) were identified as the most common perpetrators of non-physical violence. The treatment room was the most common place where the physical and non-physical violence happened. The most common factors contributing to physical violence were mental health or psychiatric patient (38.5%) while waiting to receive service (58.9 %) contributed most to non-physical violence.

**Conclusion:** Understanding workplace violence is the first phase to develop or improve appropriate strategies to handle this problem. Establishing and enacting suitable laws could enhance workplace safety violence for nurses. Further research on the topic is needed.
# Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction ........................................................................................................... 1  

Introduction ............................................................................................................................. 1  
1.1 Background ....................................................................................................................... 1  
1.2 Context of the study .......................................................................................................... 2  
1.2.1 Healthcare services in Saudi Arabia ........................................................................... 2  
1.2.2 Emergency Departments in Saudi Arabia ................................................................. 3  
1.2.3 Nursing in Saudi Arabia ............................................................................................. 3  
1.2.4 Nursing workforce in Saudi Arabia ............................................................................ 4  
1.3 Statement of the problem ................................................................................................. 4  
1.4 Research questions .......................................................................................................... 5  
1.5 Aim and objectives of the study ...................................................................................... 5  
1.6 Significance of the study ................................................................................................. 5  
1.7 Thesis structure ................................................................................................................. 5  

Chapter 2: Literature review .................................................................................................. 8  

Introduction ............................................................................................................................. 8  
2.1 Search strategy .................................................................................................................. 8  
2.2 Definition .......................................................................................................................... 8  
2.2.1 Workplace violence ..................................................................................................... 9  
2.2.2 Physical violence ......................................................................................................... 9  
2.2.3 Verbal abuse ............................................................................................................... 9  
2.2.4 Threatening behaviour ............................................................................................... 10  
2.2.5 Sexual harassment ..................................................................................................... 10  
2.3 Prevalence of violence ..................................................................................................... 10  
2.3.1 International healthcare field and EDs ....................................................................... 11  
2.3.2 Saudi healthcare field and EDs ................................................................................ 12  
2.4 Types of violence .............................................................................................................. 13  
2.5 Risk factors for violence ................................................................................................. 15  
2.5.1 Patients and their families related violence ............................................................... 15  
2.5.2 Healthcare professionals related violence ................................................................. 16  
2.5.3 Environment related violence ................................................................................... 17  
2.6 Gap in the literature ......................................................................................................... 18  

Summary ................................................................................................................................. 18
Chapter 3: Methods ........................................................................................................................................20

Introduction..................................................................................................................................................20

3.1  Research paradigm.................................................................................................................................20

3.1.1  Quantitative research.........................................................................................................................20

3.1.2  Research design..................................................................................................................................21

3.1.3  Study design (Cross-sectional study).................................................................................................21

3.1.4  Strengths and weaknesses of cross-sectional studies.........................................................................21

3.1.5  Survey ................................................................................................................................................22

3.1.6  Development of the questionnaire .....................................................................................................22

3.1.7  Translation .........................................................................................................................................23

3.1.8  Population ..........................................................................................................................................24

3.1.9  Sample and sampling .........................................................................................................................25

3.1.10 Recruitment strategies....................................................................................................................25

3.1.11 Setting ................................................................................................................................................26

3.1.12 Pilot ...................................................................................................................................................27

3.2  Data collection........................................................................................................................................28

3.3  Issues of validity and reliability ........................................................................................................28

3.4  Data analysis..........................................................................................................................................28

3.5  Ethical considerations...........................................................................................................................29

Summary ......................................................................................................................................................30

Chapter 4: Results.......................................................................................................................................33

Introduction..................................................................................................................................................33

4.1  Response rate.........................................................................................................................................33

4.2  Participants’ demographic information ...............................................................................................34

4.3  Physical and non-physical violence......................................................................................................35

4.4  Means of protection and the procedures for reporting violence.........................................................38

4.5  Inferential test.........................................................................................................................................41

4.5.1  Predictors of physical violence .........................................................................................................41

4.5.2  Predictors of non-physical violence ..................................................................................................41

4.5.3  Types of physical violence...............................................................................................................42

4.5.4  Types of non-physical violence ......................................................................................................44

Chapter 5: Discussion..................................................................................................................................48

Introduction..................................................................................................................................................48

5.1  Workplace violence.................................................................................................................................48
5.2 Physical workplace violence ................................................................................. 49
  5.2.1 Prevalence of physical violence ................................................................. 49
  5.2.2 Predictors of physical violence ................................................................. 50
  5.2.3 Types of physical violence ........................................................................ 51
  5.2.4 Risk factors relating to physical violence ................................................. 51
5.3 Non-physical workplace violence ...................................................................... 53
  5.3.1 Prevalence of non-physical violence ....................................................... 53
  5.3.2 Predictors of non-physical violence ....................................................... 53
  5.3.3 Types of non-physical violence .............................................................. 54
  5.3.4 Risk factors for non-physical violence ................................................. 55
5.4 Limitations of the study ..................................................................................... 57
5.5 Implications and recommendations of the study ............................................... 57
  5.5.1 Implications for further research ............................................................. 57
  5.5.2 Implications for practice ......................................................................... 58
  5.5.3 Implications for nursing ......................................................................... 58
Conclusion ............................................................................................................. 58

Reference list .......................................................................................................... 61

Appendices ............................................................................................................. 77
  Appendix 1: Author permission ......................................................................... 77
  Appendix 2: Questionnaire ............................................................................... 78
  Appendix 3: Information sheet .......................................................................... 88
  Appendix 4: Ethics .............................................................................................. 90
List of Tables

Table 2.1: Morrison's hierarchy of aggressive and violent behaviours ........................................10
Table 2.2: Prevalence of violence against nurses across different countries.........................11
Table 3.1: Overview of participating hospitals........................................................................26
Table 4.1: Response rate by hospital .......................................................................................33
Table 4.2: Summary of key demographic information of the emergency nurse respondents .35
Table 4.3: Summary of key physical and non-physical violence from the respondents.........37
Table 4.4: Summary of key types of physical violence in the workplace ...............................38
Table 4.5: Summary of key types of non-physical violence in the workplace ......................38
Table 4.6: Summary of key means of prevention and procedures for reporting violence......40
Table 4.7: Relationship between independent variables and frequency of physical violence .41
Table 4.8: Relationship between independent variables and frequency of non-physical violence ........................................................................................................................................42
Table 4.9: Variable result for hospitals and types of physical violence ...............................43
Table 4.10: Variable result for gender and types of physical violence .................................44
Table 4.11: Variable results for hospitals and types of non-physical violence ......................45
Table 4.12: Variable result for nationality and types of non-physical violence ......................46
Table 5.1: Comparison of prevalence of violence in EDs across different countries..............48
Table 5.2: Comparison of prevalence of physical violence in ED across different countries .50
Table 5.3: Comparison of prevalence of non-physical violence in EDs across different countries ........................................................................................................................................53