THE PREVALENCE AND INFLUENCING FACTORS FOR COMPASSION FATIGUE AMONG NURSES IN HOSPITAL KUALA LUMPUR: A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY

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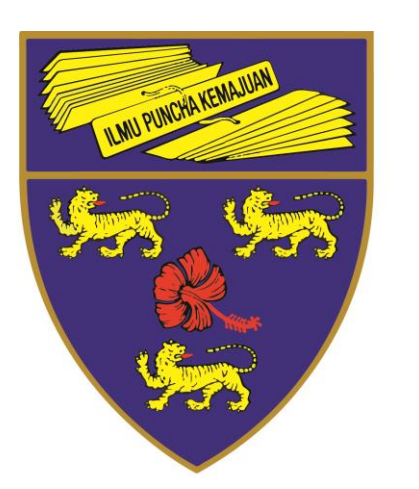
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INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVE

Nursing is a caring profession where compassion is their core value. They may experience compassion fatigue (CF) when providing patient care, which affects their well-being and job performance. Eventually, this may have implications for the quality of care. Understanding the level of CF of the nurses and the associating factors will allow the hospital's managerial level to know their mental health status, and the finding may be helpful in planning strategies and interventions to reduce the burden of the problem.

This study aimed to determine the level of CF and their associating factors among nurses in Hospital Kuala Lumpur (HKL).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study design	Cross-sectional Study
Study location	Hospital Kuala Lumpur
Study duration	April 2022 to September 2022
Study population	**Inclusion criteria:** Fully trained nurses who had served for at least 6 months. Able to read and write in English or Malay. **Exclusion criteria:** Nurse with pre-existing psychiatric illnesses (Self-report)
Sampling technique	Universal sampling
Instrument	Malay version of the Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL-M)
Data collection	Online survey to all nurses in the hospital through their "Whatsapp" groups
Data analysis	Descriptive statistics. Univariate analysis (linear regression), significant level <0.05 (SPSS 24)

RESULTS

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the participants

	n (%)
Age (Median (IQR))	33.00 (10.0)
Gender	
Female	162 (93.1)
Male	12 (6.9)
Ethnicity	
Malay	155 (89.1)
Chinese	3 (1.7)
Indian	8 (4.6)
Others	8 (4.6)
Marital status	
Single	38 (21.8)
Married	133 (76.4)
Divorced	2 (1.1)
Widowed	1 (0.6)
Dependent (Children)	
Yes	114 (65.5)
No	60 (34.5)
Life stress experience (past 12 month)	
Yes	70 (40.2)
No	104 (59.8)
Nursing education	
Diploma in nursing	107 (61.5)
Post-basic diploma (Nursing specialty)	52 (29.9)
Bachelor Degree in Nursing	15 (8.6)
Years of experience	
< 6 months	3 (1.7)
6 months to 1 year	7 (4.0)
1 to 5 years	40 (23.0)
6 to 10 years	42 (24.1)
> 10 years	82 (47.1)
Position	
Staff nurse	154 (88.5)
Nursing manager	20 (11.5)
Shift	
Yes	124 (71.3)
No	50 (28.7)
Care for COVID patient	
Yes	117 (67.2)
No	57 (32.8)

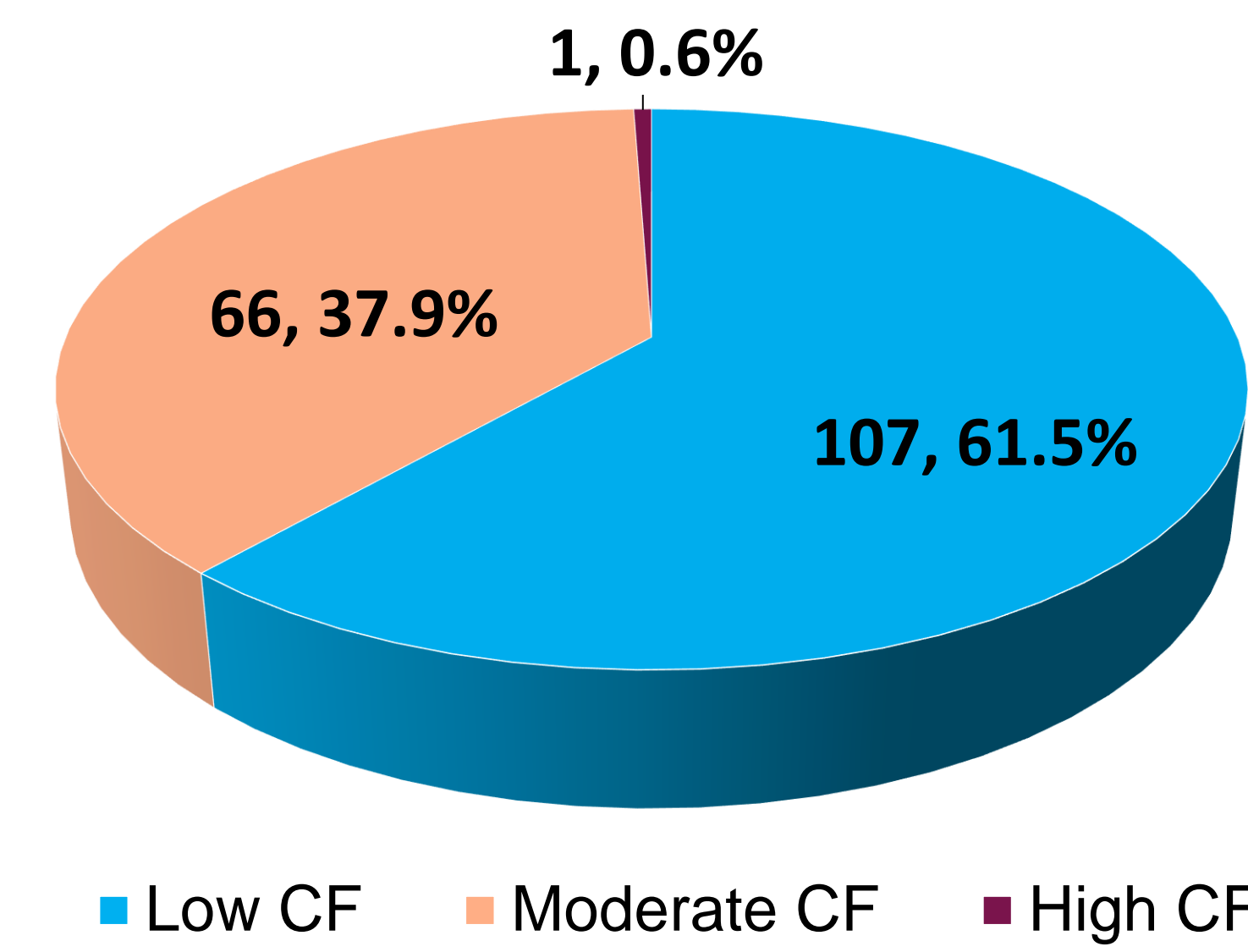IQR: interquartile range

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Figure 1: Level of compassion fatigue among nurses at Hospital Kuala Lumpur (HKL)

Table 2: Factors associated with compassion fatigue mean score among nurses in Hospital Kuala Lumpur using univariate analysis (linear regression)

Characteristic	CF Mean Score β (95% CI)	P value
Age	- 0.024 (-0.036 to -0.013)	**<0.001**
Gender		
Female	- 0.0239 (-0.600 to 0.122)	0.194
Male	Ref	
Ethnicity		
Malay	0.317 (0.026 to 0.608)	**0.033**
Non-Malay	Ref	
Marital Status		
Married	- 0.087 (-0.303 to 0.129)	0.429
Unmarried	Ref	
Dependent (Children)		
Yes	0.233 (0.043 to 0.423)	**0.017**
No	Ref	
Life stress experience (past 12 month)		
No	- 0.242 (-0.426 to -0.058)	**0.010**
Yes	Ref	
Nursing education		
Post-basic diploma (Nursing specialty) and above	- 0.177 (-0.364 to 0.010)	0.063
Diploma in Nursing	Ref	
Years of experience		
> 5 years	- 0.301 (-0.499 to -0.103)	**0.003**
≤ 5 years	Ref	
Position		
Nursing manager	- 0.435 (-0.715 to -0.154)	**0.003**
Staff nurse	Ref	
Shift		
No	- 0.361 (-0.557 to -0.165)	**<0.001**
Yes	Ref	
Care for COVID patient		
Yes	- 0.276 (-0.468 to -0.085)	**0.005**
No	Ref	

β: Beta coefficients, CF: Compassion fatigue, Ref: reference

DISCUSSION

- The finding of the level of CF differs from the result from the systematic review by W. Q. Xie et al. (2021) and Cavanagh et al. (2019), which mentioned that the levels of CF among nurses were moderate and Asian region had the highest levels of CF symptoms
- The difference in the finding probably due to cultural (Carrera et al., 2020; Gopalkrishnan, 2018; Sarkar & Punnoose, 2017) and social (Healey & Stepnick, 2019) diversity across geographic regions (Kirmayer, 2019).
- There could be response bias, acquiescence bias and social-desirability bias.
- The factors associated with CF were consistent with the finding from the systematic review by Zhang et al., 2018.
- There is a relationship between dependent (children) and CF, probably due to work-family conflict as female workers have to fulfil family household responsibilities and bear workplace pressure.

CONCLUSION

One-third of nurses in HKL experienced moderate levels of CF. Various factors contributed to CF. The hospital administrators need to explore and plan strategies to improve the working environment and safeguard the mental health of nurses in the hospital. In turn, this will improve the quality of patient care.

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