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Low back pain and related factors in nurses working in a state hospital

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Objectives: Musculoskeletal injuries are common among health care workers, especially nurses. However, there are few studies on the prevalence of lower back pain and related factors in nurses, and this study was done to determine the functional disability related to lower back pain and related factors in nurses.

Material & Method: The population of the study consisted of nurses (n=381) who were working at a state hospital in the west of Turkey and accepted to participate in the study. Data collection was achieved by means of a questionnaire prepared by the researchers and the Oswestry disability index, which was developed by Fairbank to evaluate functional disability and which was tested for validity and reliability study by Yakut et al. (2004). Ethical consent was obtained from Ege University Nursing Faculty Ethics Committee and written consent was obtained from the Aydin General Secretariat of the Public Hospitals Union and the participating nurses. Data was collected (n=196) between 1st June 2016 and 10th November 2016. In the Oswestry disability index, there were 10 questions evaluating daily living activities with six options for each question, each of which scored 0-5 points. 0-4 points were evaluated as "no disability", 5-14 points as "mild", 15-24 points as "moderate", 25-34 points as "serious" and 35-50 points as "complete functional disability". The minimum score obtained from the scale was 0 and the maximum was 50. Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal-Wallis tests were used in the analysis of the data. The analysis was made using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 22.0 for Windows.

Results: It was found that 39.3% of the nurses were in the 34-41 age group, 87.2% were female, 38.3% had a bachelor's degree, 64.3% were married, 45.9% had been working for 1-10 years, 61.7% had given birth, 41.3% were working in hospital services, and 92.3% had been working for a long time. The mean score obtained from the Oswestry disability index was 10.21±7.51; 25.5% of the nurses had 0-4 points (no disability), the 46.4% had 15-24 points (medium functional disability), and 24% had 25-34 points (severe functional impairment). It was determined that wearing high-heeled shoes, smoking cigarettes, working for long periods in a standing position, the number of years working in the profession, education level, and body mass index did not affect function due to lower back pain, but that gender, age group, having given birth, regular exercise and the marital status of the nurse did have an effect on functional disability due to lower back pain.

Conclusion: It was found that nurses experienced mild functional impairment due to lower back pain and that there was more functional disability related to lower back pain in the older age group, in female nurses who had given birth, and in those who did not exercise regularly. In-service training about working conditions should be provided to nurses so that they are less affected by their working environment, and they should be encouraged to exercise regularly.

Biography

Hulya Leblebicioglu completed her secondary and high school education in KOCAELI. In 2011, she graduated from the Department of Health Care at the School of Health at Dumlupinar University. She worked as a research assistant at Celal Bayar University in 2012. In 2012-2013 she completed her English language education at Istanbul Technical University. She was appointed as a student at Ege University Faculty of Nursing, graduated from Fundamentals of Nursing Department Master's degree and started his doctoral education in 2015.

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