

Professional Quality of Life Indicators and Turnover Intention in Forensic Nurses

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Introduction and Significance

Forensic nurses have a specialized skill set critical to providing high quality care to survivors of violence. Barriers to access to forensic nurses persist, with high role attrition a contributing factor. Retention rates are as low as 7.7% remaining in practice two years after training (GAO, 2018) and the average forensic nurse persisting in practice only three years (Fisher, 2004). Costs to healthcare organizations to train forensic nurses are approximately \$3,000 per nurse (Poitker, 2016). Turn-over of forensic nurses can be attributed to many factors related to professional quality of life which include compassion satisfaction (CS), burnout (BO) and secondary traumatic stress (STS). Compassion satisfaction is the positive quality gained by one’s ability to help and doing one’s work well. Compassion fatigue is the negative aspect of caring for others in stressful situations, comprised of burnout and secondary traumatic stress (Stamm, 2010; Okoli et al., 2020). Secondary traumatic stress is frequently used interchangeably in the literature with “vicarious trauma” (Kiley et al., 2018). Burnout is the negative outcome of consistent levels of high stress in one’s job role resulting in emotional exhaustion, depersonalization with feelings of occupational negativity, and reduced feelings of personal accomplishment or professional efficacy (Moreno et al., 2018; Sadovich, 2005; WHO, 2019).



Problem Statement

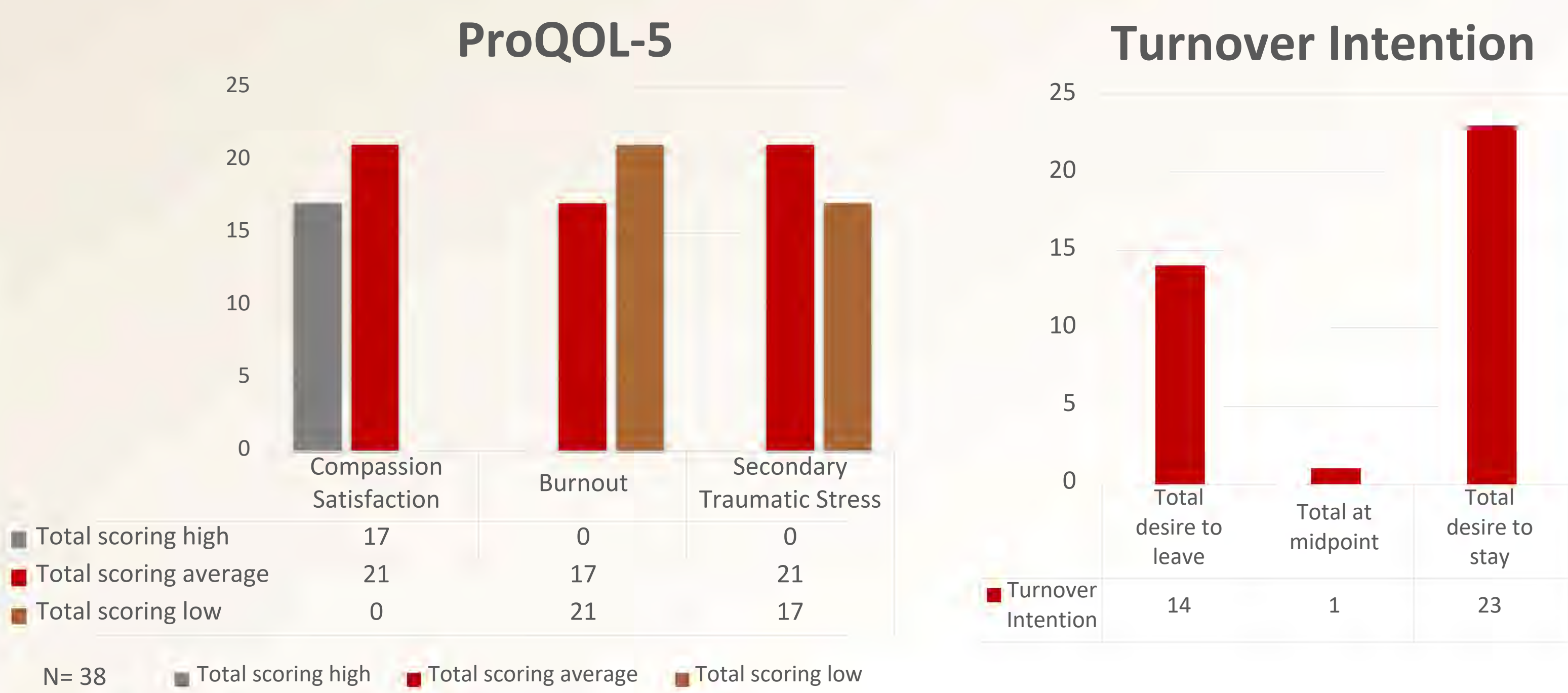
The purpose of this scholarly project was to examine the impact of an educational intervention for forensic nurses on the topic of professional quality of life on ProQOL-5 measures and turnover intention as measured by the TIS-6 (Roodt, 2004) utilizing a pre-test-post-test survey design. In forensic nurses, how does receiving education about professional quality of life versus no education effect ProQOL-5 measures and turnover intention 3 months after the educational session?

Project Description and Design

A convenience sample of forensic nurse program coordinators was used to solicit participation in the project. To identify the effect of an educational intervention on the topic of professional quality of life and strategies for mitigating the impact of stressors within the professional role, the ProQOL-5 and TIS-6 surveys were administered anonymously using Qualtrics, and scores evaluated using a pre- post-test quasi-experimental survey design. Correlation between professional quality of life indicators and turnover intention was also explored. IRB approval through Otterbein University was obtained.

Outcomes and Evaluation

Thirty-eight forensic nurse coordinators completed initial administration of both surveys and eight participants completed follow up administration. Cohort (n= 38) pre-intervention compassion satisfaction levels were average to high (\bar{x} = 41.42), burnout levels were average to low (\bar{x} = 22.53) and secondary traumatic stress levels were average to low (\bar{x} = 22.89). All participants also completed the TIS-6 (\bar{x} = 15.76, SD = 5.35). Most scores on the TIS-6 indicated a desire to stay in one’s current position (n = 23, 60%). 36.8% (n =14) of participants scored above 18, indicating a desire to leave one’s position (Roodt, 2004). Statistically significant positive correlations were noted between each professional quality of life scale indicator and turnover intention (CS r = 0.59, p <0.0001; BO r = 0.98, p < 0.0000; STS r = 0.67, p <0.0000) using Spearman’s rank order correlation coefficient. A statistically significant decrease in burnout level (α =0.05, p=0.0454) was noted post-intervention.



Professional Quality of Life Indicators Correlation to Turnover Intention Scale Score

	r_s	t	p
Compassion Satisfaction & Turnover Intention	0.5868	4.3488	0.0001
Burnout & Turnover Intention	0.9780	28.1440	0.0000
Secondary Traumatic Stress & Turnover Intention	0.6734	5.4659	0.0000

Critical value of r =0.3210, df = 36, critical value of t =2.0281, p =0.05

Welch t-test Results

Score Subsets	Pre-test mean	Post-test mean	σ^2 Pre-test	σ^2 Post-test	p
Compassion Satisfaction	41.42	43.63	22.1963	17.9821	0.2170
Burnout	22.53	18.88	19.8236	16.6964	0.0454
Secondary Traumatic Stress	23.89	20.38	32.2795	18.2678	0.0703
Turnover Intention	15.76	13.38	28.6721	16.8393	0.1820

Conclusions and Recommendations

Group average CS scores indicated average to high levels of pleasure derived from helping work as a forensic nurse and greater satisfaction in the perception of effectiveness as a caregiver within the participants. Within the sample, low levels of STS and BO could be indicative of existing positive coping strategies that should be investigated further.

Overall, though the participants ProQOL-5 scores were near ideal with high average compassion satisfaction and low average burnout and secondary traumatic stress, nurses who reported higher levels of burnout or secondary traumatic stress on ProQOL-5 subscales also had higher turnover intention scores on the TIS-6, which is consistent with previous studies (Wells-English et al., 2019; Austin et al., 2017). The correlation supports the notion that elevated stress, burnout, and exposure to the trauma of others effects forensic nurse’s desire to stay in the role. A noteworthy percentage of participants scored in a high range of turnover intention and is reflective of the elevated rates of turnover in this nursing specialty.

Related to the effect of the educational intervention, though improved ProQOL-5 indicator scores were noted in all areas following intervention, and turnover intention average scores were reduced, the only statistically significant change noted was in burnout level. The results of this project are suggestive that receiving education about professional quality of life could positively affect professional quality of life indicators and mitigate turnover intention in forensic nurses.

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References and Abstract



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