Psychological Well-Being of Mental Health Nurses in the Time of Covid 19: Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the psychological well-being of nurses is at stake. As nurses, especially mental health nurses, the stressful environment around day-to-day care and additional work in addition to nursing care and inaccuracies in how to cope with problems that arose during the pandemic, left mental health nurses psychologically burdened. The research method used in this study is a systematic approach adopted for the literature review. Databases searched include SCIENCE DIRECT, SCOPUS, SPINGERLINK, TAYLOR & FRANCIS, and WILEY. The search was conducted from September 2022 to December 2022. Strict criteria were given that the study must examine the psychological well-being status of mental health nurses during COVID-19; It must be stated that the mental health nurse in question is a nurse who works in mental health services, including in hospitals and communities; using quantitative and qualitative methods as well as mix methods must be published in English: and the required studies were published in March 2020 to 2022. All 10 articles were included in the review to be assessed for quality. For data analysis, a deductive approach is carried out according to the theory of psychological well-being, and content analysis is carried out, namely grouping categories after the integration of quantitative evidence, qualitative, mixed methods, and then categorial synthesis is carried out. The results of this study stated that the initial search resulted in a total of 7,752 publications, ultimately resulting in 10 studies reviewed, in the form of 6 quantitative studies, 3 mixed methods studies, and 1 qualitative study. Six (6) categories are arranged according to Ryff's theory of psychological well-being: autonomy, environmental mastery, self-development, positive relationships with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. The studies reviewed show that the efforts made by mental health nurses in providing nursing care in accordance with COVID-19 prevention and control programs have shown success in maintaining the psychological well-being status of mental nurses.


INTRODUCTION

The novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19), caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, was first reported in December 2019. By April 2021, it had infected more than 130 million people and caused around 3,000,000 deaths worldwide (Organization, 2020). COVID-19 has also had an impact on nurses' psychology.

Evaluation of the psychological and physical impact of COVID-19 on frontline nurses has been widely conducted (Aljaberi et al., 2022; Hao et al., 2020a; Wang et al., 2020a) and found mild anxiety was much more elevated among frontline nurses than non-frontline nurses, insomnia and weight loss were positively associated with PTSD and anxiety and more frontline
nurses had PTSD than non-frontline nurses thus providing strong clues that COVID-19 was adversely affecting the mental and physical health of frontline nurses (Li et al., 2021; Magyar & Keyes, 2019). Nurses are the profession most psychologically affected due to the breadth of nurses’ responsibilities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

COVID-19 has had an impact on the psychological well-being of nursing professionals. A person’s limits operating at their peak potential are the definition of psychological well-being (Aflakseir et al., 2020; Magyar & Keyes, 2019). (Fonseca Gutiérrez, 2020) core model of psychological well-being contains six critical elements of personal growth, autonomy, environmental mastery, self-acceptance, meaningful relationships, and life purpose. Individuals who have high psychological well-being will have independence in life, be able to develop their potential, be able to control and utilize the environment where individuals are, have life goals to be achieved, be able to establish positive relationships with others, and can have good self-acceptance (Ariani, 2019; Aulia & Panjaitan, 2019). During the COVID-19 outbreak, research was conducted to assess the psychological well-being and other relevant aspects of nurses in Turkey and found that 67.7% of 367 respondents reported having moderate or severe psychological problems; 46.1% reported having moderate to severe depressive symptoms; 48.0% had moderate to severe symptoms of anxiety; and 48.4% had moderate to severe stress levels, and found nurses were much more likely to experience problems with psychological well-being, negatively affected by a major traumatic event, and has low self-efficacy (Aulia & Panjaitan, 2019; Hasan & Waggas, 2022). In Indonesia, it was found that the stress experienced by nurses during COVID-19 is related to the level of psychological well-being of nurses. This stress can come from individuals, families, or the environment (Sharif Nia et al., 2021; Tutupary et al., 2021).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the psychological well-being of nurses is at stake. As nurses, especially mental health nurses, the stressful environment around day-to-day care and additional work in addition to nursing care and inaccuracies in how to cope with problems that arose during the pandemic, left mental health nurses psychologically burdened. A number of studies have been conducted to investigate the psychological well-being of nurses. However, literature reviews aimed at understanding the psychological well-being of mental health nurses are still very scarce. This review intends to answer the following question: What is the psychological well-being of mental health nurses during COVID-19? More specifically, the aim is to search, identify, and synthesize relevant studies on the psychological well-being of mental health nurses. The approach taken in this study is in the form of a systematic literature review.
METHODS

A systematic approach is taken to conduct a literature review. This kind of approach offers a more rigorous synthesis method than traditional reviews. This systematic review conducts activities to comprehensively find and synthesize research related to a particular question, using organized, transparent, and replicable procedures at each step.

One of the principles used in this review is to limit the bias in selecting published research. It involves the use of explicit and strict criteria for selecting articles. This criterion allows researchers to ensure that only studies relevant to the research question are included in the review. Specific inclusion and exclusion criteria are determined prior to the start of the review. The inclusion criteria stipulate that studies should examine the psychological well-being status of mental health nurses in times of COVID-19; It must be stated that the mental health nurse in question is a nurse who works in mental health services, including in hospitals and communities; studies used using quantitative and qualitative methods as well as mix methods aimed at collecting data on psychological well-being status; must be published in English: and the required studies were published in March 2020 to 2022. Exclusion is studied with subjects that are not health workers, studies under 2020, and studies with research on mental health status.

The search strategy involves using a number of search terms, including mental health nurse, psychological well-being, and status. Synonyms include mental health nurse OR psychiatric nurse OR psychosocial nurse, status OR level OR degree. The search was conducted through SCIENCE DIRECT, SCOPUS, SPINGERLINK, TAYLOR &; FRANCIS, and WILEY.

The search was conducted from September 2022 to December 2022. The initial search yielded 7,752 publications, and the title search excluded 7,888 articles. Abstracts of the remaining 188 articles were then taken. Further examination of the abstracts resulted in 33 articles to be read in full, and 10 articles were obtained to be assessed for quality. A summary of the process is detailed in Figure 1.
Next, detailed information about the article’s description is extracted, such as participant characteristics, study settings, recruitment approaches, and data analysis methods (Appendix 1). The deductive approach taken in this review is in the form of a theoretical framework of psychological well-being. Critical concepts in psychological well-being are identified, then grouped categories/sub-categories with something in common, looking for differences between categories/sub-categories using the N-VIVO 12 tool to assist the content analysis process. Next, a synthesis process is carried out to answer questions from this review.

RESULTS

Of the 10 articles reviewed, most concern Western countries, such as the US (1 article), Italy (1 article), the UK (3 articles), Ireland (1 article), and Spain (1 article). Other articles concern non-Western countries, such as China (2) and Australia (1). The total sample size of psychiatric nurses was 5,037. Ten (10) articles reviewed were 6 quantitative studies with cross-sectional methods, 3 mixed methods studies, and 1 qualitative study.
The following data synthesis by *means of content analysis* is based on the concept of psychological well-being from Ryff, 2013, with its 6 elements, namely positive relationships with others, autonomy, self-development, environmental mastery, self-acceptance, and goals in life. Mental health nurses have warm, fulfilling relationships and strong, trusting relationships with others. Autonomy, i.e., being able to self-determine and be independent, resisting social pressure to act in a certain way, and evaluating oneself by personal standards. Self-development is seeing oneself as a developing person, being open to new experiences, realizing one's potential, and seeing self-improvement over time.

The next element of psychological well-being from Ryff, 2013 is environmental mastery, self-acceptance, and purpose in life. Environmental mastery is competence in managing the environment, utilizing opportunities around it effectively, and creating a context that suits personal needs and values. Self-acceptance is having a positive attitude towards yourself, acknowledging and accepting various aspects of yourself, and feeling optimistic about past lives. The purpose of life is to find meaning in every life event and hold beliefs that become goals in life.

The following are the results of data synthesis (*content analysis*) that can be found in the review of the article.

- Positive relationships with others.

Of all the articles reviewed, positive relationships with others are described in various forms, such as mental health nurses' relationships towards their service users (Foye et al., 2021a) and relationships in the form of support from managers and colleagues at work (Foye et al., 2021a; Johnson et al., 2021a). Amid findings that mental health nurses are concerned about the quality of their relationships with colleagues and managers due to large workloads and policy changes that continue to occur during the COVID-19 period, it was also found that mental health nurses have relatively good relationships with colleagues and leaders, but are more dissatisfied with the work itself (Foye et al., 2021b; Jin, 2022). However, relationships with others become a problem for mental health nurses when worried about self-infection, transmitting the infection to friends, family, patients, and colleagues (Hao et al., 2020b; Jin, 2022; Pappa et al., 2021). Conversely, no one reported a decrease in the quality of positive relationships with other in mental health nurses because it could still be done through online platforms (Hasan & Waggas, 2022; Yin et al., 2022).

Positive relationships with family are hampered by a lack of access to family support networks, as a result of which mental health nurses feel lonely due to or exacerbated by social distancing.
and self-isolation (Foye et al., 2021b; Johnson et al., 2021b). In contrast to other findings, it is stated that family support is a negative moderating effect, which means it has a counterproductive effect on mental health nurses (Jin, 2022; Wang et al., 2020b; Yin et al., 2022). Jin., 2022, found that when mental health nurses, in their relationships with family, receive enormous support when faced with difficult situations in the workplace, mental health nurses do not have sufficient resources to address problems in the workplace. Different findings state that the quality of mental health nurses' relationships with families has not changed (Luhmann & Intelisano, 2018).

- Self-government
Mental health nurses have high autonomy during COVID-19, despite feeling dissatisfied with their work (Pappa et al., 2021; Rinner et al., 2022). Mental health nurses are tenacious nurses at work (Jin, 2022). Mental health nurses report only mild levels of depressive symptoms and anxiety and, on average, can fulfill their professional responsibilities (Rinner et al., 2022). Another different thing was revealed by another article, namely that mental health nurses have a feeling of helplessness in dealing with the COVID-19 situation, not knowing when the pandemic will end or how the future development will cause high anxiety in mental health nurses (Foye et al., 2021b).

- Personal Development
In the synthesis results, there were groupings in mental health nurses' self-development during COVID-19, including education, adaptability, technology, work atmosphere, use of PPE, challenges, and personal characteristics. Mentally educated mental health nurses rally reports higher rates of mental health than their peers. It is possible that many factors contribute to mental well-being, where those with a post-graduate education are more likely to become advanced practice nurses and, thus, more likely to work in an outpatient environment (Yin et al., 2022). Similarly, mental health nurses with higher qualifications, such as MNS/Ph.D., than Regional School Diplomas are a protective factor in increasing stress levels(Ariani, 2019).

The rapid adaptation that mental health nurses have to make to how they work, with more than 60% of participants feeling this change is too fast with the new way of working (Foye et al., 2021b; Johnson et al., 2021b). Although mental health nurses develop themselves by improving their ability in terms of technology, many reports that using such new technology is hampered by logistical challenges such as poor internet connections, hardware availability, and cognitively impaired mental health service recipients, young people, and those with autism or
experiencing psychosis and/or paranoia due to their level of understanding, access, and trust in the technology used that has not been maximized (Foye et al., 2021b).

More than a quarter reports stress due to staff shortages (Foye et al., 2021b). Mental health nurses report concerns that service users may have difficulty understanding or keeping up with current government requirements on social distancing, self-isolation, and/or protection, service users may lack trust in services or have lost cognition, and this may explain the challenges mental health nurses experience inwards with respect to distancing issues social and adherence to guidelines (Foye et al., 2021b; Johnson et al., 2021b; Pappa et al., 2021). The tension between meeting clinical needs and infection control are reported across the continuum, for example, in response to emergencies inwards or when service users in communities require home visits, where infection control measures are tough to implement (Tutupary et al., 2021). Work guidelines frequently change (Jin, 2022; Johnson et al., 2021b).

When exercising restraints, the patient performs behaviors harmful to himself and others, where there may not be time to wear PPE or where wearing PPE may pose a risk(Johnson et al., 2021b). The prevalence of burnout is particularly prominent, with 52% noting moderate/severe emotional exhaustion, 19.5% moderate/severe depersonalization, and 55.5% of low/moderate personal achievement (Pappa et al., 2021).

The average comparison shows higher stress levels in women than men, among nurses under 30 years of age, among the least experienced in mental health (Aulia & Panjaitan, 2019).

- **Environmental Mastery**

Mastery of the new environment due to COVID-19 in the form of new ways of working; remote work; risk of infection/infection control challenges; and its impact on service users. Targeted guidelines are needed to support mental health nurses who provide care and support during the pandemic to people with severe mental distress (Foye et al., 2021b; Johnson et al., 2021b). In China, hospitals have now implemented stricter regulations and more complicated workflows due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Jin, 2022). Mental health nurses do several things to control their work environment, such as working remotely and providing services through new phone, video, and online platforms (Foye et al., 2021b; Johnson et al., 2021b). Crisis assessment centers were quickly established as an alternative to hospital emergency departments and new crisis phone lines and reorganized psychiatric nursing services (Johnson et al., 2021b). Those who work in outpatient settings generally report higher levels of mental health than their peers(Coffey, 2022).
- **Self-Acceptance**

The mental health nurse's self-acceptance in her awareness that she is part of the frontline in the fight against COVID-19 can be seen in the work arrangement and role that can be done well, so it is not a strong predictor of psychological well-being (Li et al., 2021).

- **Purpose in Life**

Mental health caregivers report concerns over their own risk and risk to family or friends (Foye et al., 2021b). Concerns about immediate infection control are exceptionally prominent for inpatient staff (Johnson et al., 2021b). The opposite was found, that concern for the Coronavirus was lower in the sample of mental health nurses studied (Tutupary et al., 2021). Many health mental health nurses report feeling more stressed and overwhelmed at work (Pappa et al., 2021) and exhausted (Jin, 2022).

In the results of the synthesis, it was found that "Environmental Mastery" is closely related to "Self-Development", as shown in figure 2 in the form of the following diagram.

![Figure 2 Crosstab Diagram](image)

The "State of the Art" table illustrates the most researched and understudied elements of mental health nurses' psychological well-being, which may become future research opportunities.

**Table 1 State of The Art**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref</th>
<th>Positive Relationships with Others</th>
<th>Self-government</th>
<th>Personal Development</th>
<th>Environmental Mastery</th>
<th>Self-Acceptance</th>
<th>Purpose in Life</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Naples et al., 2022</td>
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DISCUSSION

Ten (10) articles reviewed show that the psychological well-being of mental health nurses during COVID-19 times is experiencing many challenges. This can be seen in every element of mental health nurses' psychological well-being that has been found in this article review, namely positive relationships with others, autonomy, self-development, environmental mastery, self-acceptance, and life goals.

Regarding mental health nurses' positive relationships with others, the other person in question can be explained as a user of their services, managers and co-workers, friends, and family. There was a decline in the quality of interpersonal relationships, but there were also ways mental health nurses maintained positive relationships with others. Amid concerns about COVID-19 transmission when conducting face-to-face interpersonal relationships, online platforms have become a way for mental health nurses to maintain positive relationships with others.
Positive relationships with others become a problem for mental health nurses when concerns arise about self-infection, transmitting the infection to friends, family, patients, and colleagues (Jin, 2022; Pappa et al., 2021). Dan Jin., 2022, found that while mental health nurses receive enormous support from their families when faced with a difficult work situation during COVID-19, they do not have enough resources to address their problems. Jin's findings are interesting because they contradict previous theories, such as those proposed by Ryff & Singer, 2008, that people who do not have good relationships with others (family, for example) will have little trust in relationships, find it difficult to open up, feel lonely, and become frustrated in interpersonal relationships. They will also not want to cooperate to maintain close relationships with others. This contradiction leads to aspects of mental health nurses' independence in overcoming their problems, which must always be cultivated in improving the quality of positive relationships with others.

From the results of the study, it was found that mental health nurses have high autonomy during the COVID-19 period. Even though they are dissatisfied with their work, mental health nurses are still tenacious in working. Some mental health nurses reported only mild symptoms of depression and anxiety and could fulfill their professional responsibilities on average. However, there was something different revealed by another article in the study, namely, mental health nurses have feelings of helplessness in the face of the COVID-19 situation, not knowing when the pandemic will end.

Satisfaction, a higher need, mediates the relationship between autonomous orientation and increased behavior (Ariani, 2019). Likewise, the discovery of dissatisfaction of mental health nurses in performing services during COVID-19 caused an increase in helpless behavior in the face of COVID-19. This is also supported by a number of experimental investigations showing preliminary evidence that the relationship between autonomy and well-being is mediated by satisfaction with achievement in meeting needs (Rinner et al., 2022).

Autonomy, which means independence, self-determination, and self-actualization in some mental health nurses during COVID-19, can still be maintained because mental health nurses at work can exercise good self-control. People who act reasonably because of their sense of control show greater well-being improvement than those told to do so by others (Luhmann & Intelisano, 2018). Of course, COVID-19 attacks the autonomy of mental health nurses because they do not know when the pandemic will end or how the future will develop. However, with tenacity and enthusiasm for work that is very intersecting with having a purpose in life, they can maintain the autonomy of mental health nurses in their daily lives.
The personal development or growth of mental health nurses during the COVID-19 period from the study’s results can be grouped into education, adaptability, technology, work atmosphere, PPE challenges, challenges, and personal characteristics. These 7 things, if given attention in the development process, can improve the self-development of mental health nurses. Mental health nurses who always develop themselves through formal education, such as postgraduate level, have higher psychological well-being than their colleagues. Of course, mental health nurses who have higher psychological well-being can adapt well to changes that occur during the COVID-19 period, master technology, and become leaders who create a conducive work atmosphere in the midst of increasing work challenges. This is in accordance with what was conveyed by Ryff, 1989, that a person's ability to realize one's potential, have the spirit to continue to grow and be open to new experiences that will be faced in the future shows good self-development.

As stated by Woolley &; Fishbach 2022, that good personal growth can also be achieved through uncomfortable life experiences or processes, such as emotional instability, learning about the health crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic, facing political ideologies that are very contrary to oneself, or witnessing gun violence, which inspires one to find ways to overcome discomfort to expand one's capacity. The challenges for mental health nurses to develop their capacity during COVID-19 are adapting to new ways of working, staff shortages in the workplace, physical restraint on patients with violent behavior, with health protocols that require social distancing. This challenge spurs mental health nurses to seek appropriate nursing care to prevent transmission, seek the latest information and knowledge about preventing COVID-19 transmission through training on the use of PPE, for example, and other COVID-19-related training so that mental health nurses can continually improve their development.

In controlling the changing environment during COVID-19, mental health nurses were found to fully participate in creating new ways of working, such as working remotely and providing services through new phones and video as well as online platforms. As stated by Ryff, 1989, environmental mastery is a person's capacity to make decisions in exerting influence over the surrounding environment through physical and mental actions, as well as the ability to take advantage of existing opportunities to shape one's environment in accordance with the values and standards of society. The ability of mental health nurses to modify this environment indicates positive psychological well-being. Subsequent means include crisis assessment centers being set up quickly as alternatives to hospital emergency departments, new crisis hotlines, and reorganized mental nursing services.

As shown in the State-of-the-Art table above, the mental health nurse self-acceptance
aspect is the least researched. This provides a great opportunity in the future to further examine how self-acceptance in the form of self-esteem and mental health nurses' self-awareness of their strengths and weaknesses when facing challenges during COVID-19. From the results of the review, only 1 study was found that led to an element of self-acceptance indicated by work arrangements and the role of mental health nurses that can be done well, so this is not a strong predictor of psychological well-being (Li et al., 2021). However, other aspects related to the self-acceptance of mental health care workers during COVID-19 have not been studied.

The importance of in-depth exploration going forward about the level of self-acceptance in psychological well-being if it is associated with findings of low job satisfaction. Low self-acceptance causes a person to be dissatisfied with his appearance, disappointed in the past, and yearn to change who or become what he is now (Fonseca Gutiérrez, 2020). Self-acceptance is shown as acceptance of the characteristics of one's personal self-nature, regardless of intelligence, behavior, or competence, without relying on the approval, respect, or love they may receive from others or vice versa (Foye et al., 2021b). Self-acceptance also protects the person from stressful conditions such as substandard performance, disparaging comments from coworkers, problems with body image, and other difficulties that could have occurred (Hao et al., 2020b). The element of self-acceptance is just as important as other elements of psychological well-being because if the mental health nurse does not give a proportionate value to his person, it will be easy to experience stress. It is hoped that with frequent research on the elements of self-acceptance, it can be known how to improve the psychological well-being status of mental health nurses.

The last element is purpose in life. From the findings, mental health nurses reported concerns related to the risks posed by COVID-19, stress, and being overwhelmed at work (Foye et al., 2021b; Jin, 2022; Johnson et al., 2021b). However, the opposite finding is that concern for the Coronavirus was lower in the sample of mental health nurses studied (Fonseca Gutiérrez, 2020). Someone with the right life goals will have a clearer and more directed life, be able to hold firm beliefs in life and understand the meaning of life. However, on the contrary, someone without a purpose in life tends to feel meaningless, does not know why things happen, and has false beliefs (Fonseca Gutiérrez, 2020). This shows that mental health nurses who can find meaning in this COVID-19 disaster event have a good quality of purpose in life, evidenced by a low sense of worry.

The synthesis results show that mental health nurses' self-development and environmental mastery are the most studied elements compared to 4 other elements. This
suggests that more research is needed on mental health nurses' psychological well-being: positive relationships with others, autonomy, self-acceptance, and purpose in life.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study stated that the initial search yielded a total of 7,752 publications, which in turn resulted in 10 reviewed studies, in the form of 6 quantitative studies, 3 mixed methods studies, and 1 qualitative study. Six (6) categories are arranged according to Ryff's theory of psychological well-being: autonomy, environmental mastery, self-development, positive relationships with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. The reviewed studies show that the efforts made by mental health nurses in providing nursing care in accordance with the COVID-19 prevention and control program have shown success in maintaining the psychological well-being status of mental nurses. This review broadly illustrates mental health nurses' psychological well-being, showing that aspects of self-development and environmental mastery by mental care are more prominent than others. Mental health nurses' efforts to provide nursing care in accordance with COVID-19 prevention and control programs have shown success in maintaining the psychological well-being status of mental health nurses.

SUGGESTIONS

Mental health nurses should continuously improve the quality of autonomy, personal growth, positive relationships with others, environmental control, self-acceptance, and life goals to achieve optimal psychological well-being.

REFERENCE


Pappa, S., Barnett, J., Berges, I., & Sakkas, N. (2021). Tired, worried and burned out, but still resilient: A cross-sectional study of mental health workers in the UK during the


