

ADAPTIVE RESILIENCE AND EMOTIONAL FORTITUDE: EXPERIENCES OF EMERGENCY
ROOM NURSES IN A GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL

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Abstract

This descriptive-qualitative study explored the experiences of emergency room nurses, facing the influx of patients, threats from patients and significant others, decreasing amount of manpower, the scarcity of supplies, patients with mental illnesses or substance abuse, triaging, and prioritization among cases arrived in the emergency room. This study also assessed the support systems of emergency room nurses, and their relationship among other staffs. The work collaboration, the work communication of the team and achieving daily tasks and administering the quality of care to patients. This study also includes the support systems of emergency room nurses seeking assistance from their nurse managers and nurse supervisors. This study also examined the participants' work satisfaction, their sense of vocation in the profession, and their coping strategies, identifying the ways they prevent stress and work fatigue. By using a qualitative descriptive approach, in-depth interviews were conducted with ten emergency room nurses working more than 6 months or more of experience. From these, 988 transcribed statements, 50 significant statements, were drawn. Colaizzis' method of analysis was used to analyze for the study of ten emergency room nurses. Five emergent themes surfaced through thematic analysis, the first is Adaptive resilience, Emotional fortitude, Teamwork and collective, reflective growth and lastly the faith and well-being. Each emergent themes includes 5 cluster themes. The first, Physical and mental exhaustion, Limited manpower, Supply shortage, Workplace safety, Patient unpredictability. The second emergent theme, Emotional regulation, Stress breaks, Boundary setting, Positive coping, Emotional strength. The third emergent theme, Social support, Collaboration, Peer care, Team coordination, Colleague support. The fourth emergent theme, Continuous learning, Peer empathy, Skill mastery, Therapeutic communication and. Professional growth. Lastly the fifth emergent theme.

Keywords: *Emergency room nurses, Vocation, Government Hospital, Nurse well-being, Descriptive-Qualitative, Digos City Philippines*

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Introduction

Emergency room nurses are pivotal in delivering urgent care, managing multiple patients in critical and life-threatening conditions. Exploring their experiences that can provides insights of the increase challenges in the emergency room and their coping strategies. The cumulative stress of emergency work manifest in various ways, extending beyond typical feelings of fatigue or irritability and shows the impact of their vocation of the profession (Corkern 2025). Emergency room nurses face sorts of challenges, that negatively influence the inability to provide high-quality patient care, with the overcrowding, verbal abuse or threats, the lack of resources, low salary pay and the decrease of manpower. It can result to higher turnover rates, and leaving patients receiving insufficient care (Al-ghabeesh et. al, 2023).

A study in Cambridge University UK states that Working in the Emergency room requires proper

orientation, education and training, and it should be carefully planned according to their actual duties, roles and responsibilities (Zakaria 2024). Challenges of Emergency room nurses also includes the scarcity of resources of treating patients related to armed conflict injuries, triage mass casualties, and trauma care (Mani et. al, 2024). Emotional and physical stress, fatigue is a common issues felt by emergency room nurses, handling multiple demanding patients dealing day to day, emergency room nurses don't know how to cope up and prevent burnout and dissatisfaction of their work (Hetherington 2024). One of the Challenges, specifically on handling patients with end of life care, and discussing with the family about the condition of their loved one and the delayed transfer to inpatient wards is challenging for emergency room nurses, explaining to the family with the limited resources for end-of-life care for the patient in the hospital (Tiah et.

al, 2023). Saudi Arabias' congestion in the Emergency room is drastically increases due to prioritizing patients who in need of immediate care. The congestion is due to influx of patients and short-staffing, leading to insufficient amount of supplies especially beds for patients, this faces dilemmas for emergency room nurses (Jefferson et. al, 2024). With the increasing amount of patients and the mismatch of nurse to patient ratio leading to negative health outcomes, decrease quality of care, (Delgado 2021). Optimal nurse staffing remains a key issue in hospital administration and nursing management especially worldwide (Waner et. al, 2024). In the Philippines, Emergency room nurses' faces higher level of distress from physical and psychological (Duan W Et. al, 2020). Due to enormous nursing function, lengthy work hours, emergency room nurses are constantly faced with psychological pressure (Talosig et. al,

2021). Increase work load, short staffing, extended hours of shifts, decrease management support are associated with burnout in the profession (Chiara et. al, 2020).

With regards of no published literatures such as, nurse education for emergency room nurses. A continuing development of the profession for emergency nursing (Considine 2023). Unpublished literatures that includes Violence and threats from patients against Emergency room nurses that causes the reduction and dissatisfaction of work (Shayan et. al, 2022) lastly, literatures from nurse managers to staffs preventing turnover intent. With These gaps highlights the need for more research to uncover hidden discoveries of emergency room nurses, and improve the quality of care in the profession (Michelle 2021).

Methods

This study used a descriptive-qualitative research design is a flexible and pragmatic approach that aims to provide a comprehensive summary of specific events or experiences of the 10 emergency room nurses. They were selected through a purposive sampling, ensuring that these individuals are relevant to provide data according to their experiences and also provide meaningful insights about their roles and responsibilities of their work The interviews were conducted in a quiet and convenient settings which can prevent interruption of the interview, free from unnecessary noise, to ensure the clarity of answers of the participants. Follow-up questions were incorporated into the interview process to encourage participants to elaborate their answers about the experiences and perspectives working in the department. The interviews are audio-recorded then transcribed verbatim to ensure data accuracy. Interviews were used as the primary method of data collection and were guided by a questionnaire validated by experts in the field of research. Once the necessary data were gathered, the interviews concluded, and participants were acknowledged and appreciated for their participation in the study. Creswell's thematic analysis method was used to analyze the compiled data obtained from all

participating nurses. The generated themes were subsequently re-evaluated by the participants as a final validation step to ensure that their intended messages were accurately represented in the study.

The orientation also included an explanation of the participants' rights, which encompassed, but were not limited to, the right to self-determination and their voluntary decision to participate, the right to ask questions, the right to refuse to provide information, and the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

This study was conducted in a secondary government hospital in Davao del sur. A total of 127 staff nurses worked in the hospital and were assigned to other departments. The secondary government hospital is selected for the study, for it offers several benefits for Emergency Room nurses, and provides the qualities of creating a qualitative-descriptive study. Nurses in the Emergency room working for at least 6 months of experience or more, have ensured relevant and accurate data for the study. Working with the participants, leading to more open and thorough responses, especially on sensitive topics about the department. And lastly to address departmental concerns and the challenges of staffs about what are the experiences of emergency room nurses caring for patients working in a Government hospita

Results and discussions

Table 1. Participants Profile

Code	Age	Gender	Marital status	Place of residence	Employment Status	Study Group
N1	28	Female	Single	Digos City	Contract of Service	IDI
N2	35	Male	Married	Digos City	Full time	IDI
N3	25	Male	Single	Digos City	Contract of Service	IDI
N4	26	Male	Single	Sulop DavSur	Contract of Service	IDI
N5	32	Female	Married	Digos City	Fulltime	IDI

N6	27	Female	Single	Digos City	Contract of service	IDI
N7	32	Female	Single	Hagonoy DavSur	Fulltime	IDI
N8	26	Female	Single	Digos City	Contract of service	IDI
N9	27	Female	Single	Magsaysay Dagsur	Contract of service	IDI
N10	40	Female	Married	Digos City	Fulltime	IDI

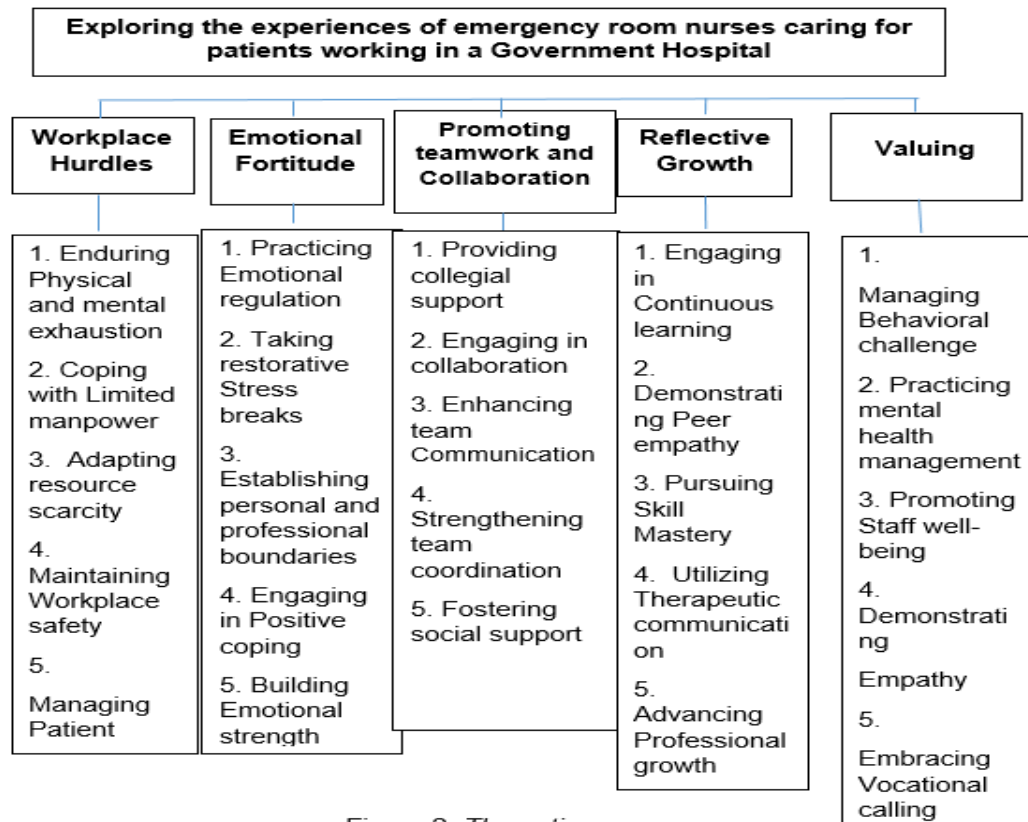


Figure 2. Thematic map

Results and discussion

The thematic analysis of the data from the in-depth interviews with the 10 emergency room nurses that sum-up their lived experiences working in the emergency room. *Workplace hurdles*, *Emotional fortitude*, *Promoting teamwork*, *Collaboration*, *Reflective growth* and *Valuing*. A total of 463 significant statements, were drawn, forming the foundational basis for thematic analysis and interpretation. From the 792 transcribed statements were merged to 25 cluster themes. The first theme *Workplace hurdles*, explores emergency room nurses difficulties, obstacles and challenges when working in the department, which can hinder their work productivity and negatively impact their well-being.

Explores emergency room nurses difficulties, obstacles and challenges when working in the department, which can hinder their work productivity and negatively impact their well-being. The second emergent theme *Emotional fortitude*, captures the significance of emotional fortitude of emergency room nurses, that speaks to the profound inner strength required not only to provide critical care, but to do so while managing the psychological toll of witnessing suffering, loss, and crisis on a daily basis. The third emergent theme *Promoting teamwork and Collaboration*, the collaboration and cooperation of emergency room nurses, having the same goal and achieving the same tasks, providing quality care

towards patients. Working in a high-pressure environment, involving mutual supports, clear communication, shared decision-making, and trust ensuring that patient care is delivered efficiently. The fourth emergent theme *Reflective growth*, the continuing education of the profession, through experience or in a formal education, examining emotions, actions and performance in the clinical environment to gain insight, improve practice, and enhance professional and personal development. It will help emergency room nurses learn from high-stakes, fast paced environment and apply that learning to improve patient care, communication and overall status in the work environment.

Lastly, the fifth emergent theme highlights the dimension of spirituality that helps them find meaning and purpose of their vocation and to their challenging work. Faith and well-being Acts as a protective factor against the high levels of stress and anxiety. If integrated into their daily lives and work, faith can significantly improve the overall well-being of Emergency room nurses.

Discussions

Emergent theme 1: Workplace Hurdles

Explores emergency room nurses difficulties, obstacles and challenges when working in the department, which can hinder their work productivity and negatively impact their well-being. The thing that needs to be considered is the workload of employees which affects work stress and ultimately causes a decrease in employee performance (Herdiana & Sary 2023).

Cluster theme 1.1 Enduring Physical and Mental exhaustion

This theme highlights how emergency room nurses experience physical and mental exhaustion. Prolonged shifts, high patient acuity, unpredictable patient and workloads, and emotionally taxing situations. Despite chronic fatigue, they remain committed to delivering quality care. This theme reflects the dual burden of physical strain from continuous movement and mental fatigue from constant decision-making and emotional labor, often without adequate rest or support.

"Handling multiple patients is exhausting."
(N8, Lines 882-884)

"Mass vehicular crash overwhelmed staff." (N5,
Lines 478-482)

Moments are very overwhelming for emergency room nurses if assigned in the triage section. Influx of patients sometimes are stressful. According to (Göransson et. al, 2024) components that contribute to the complexity of the emergency department context include loosely assembled teams with uneven skills and an uneven influx of patients with a wide variety of presentations and severities.

Cluster theme 1.2 Coping with limited manpower

This theme conveys how important staffing in the emergency room, upon critical shortage of medical personnel in the emergency room it exposes patients and staff alike to heightened risks, delays in care, and emotional burnout, revealing the urgent need for systemic healthcare reform within the hospital that can delay treatment of patients.

the shortage of staff that requires prioritization and adaptability. It compromises patient care, increases waiting time, and places immense pressure on healthcare workers, leading to burnout and reduced efficiency. (Ramsey 2018) states that staffing isn't just about maintaining nominal headcounts, it's the number of nursing hours that matters for flow and efficiency.

"We only have 2-3 nurses every shift... need proper triaging." (N1, Lines 11-12)

"Lack of staff made time management hard." (N8,
Lines 812-819).

These are the situations that are in need of immediate actions of ER nurses following a mass vehicular crash. Such as rapid triage, airway management, hemorrhage control, and emotional support. To utilize their expertise in triage and emergency protocols. During the initial phase of trauma, emergency nurses are educated to assess and collaboratively treat patients. Emergency nurses work in an environment replete with chaos, violence, unrealistic patient expectations, and death while experiencing stress and witnessing tragedies (Amanda 2021).

The lack of staffing in the emergency room significantly hinders time management for nurses, forcing them to prioritize critical cases under pressure while routine care is delayed, ultimately compromising. (Drennan 2024) emphasizes that it is evident that lower levels of nurse staffing are associated with adverse events that can result in delays to the provision of care and serious outcomes for patients.

Cluster theme 1.3 Adapting resource scarcity

The increased number of patients came in to the emergency room, supply shortages are very common, and you cannot rely on the minimal amount of instrument even medications that can't sustain the influx of patients. Emergency room nurses initiates improvisation of materials and equipment's, nurses only rely on the medications that they prescribed to the significant others, sharing participants' insights on supply shortages.

"Restocking drugs isn't easy." (N3, Lines 255-259)

"You must be resourceful with lacking equipment."
(N4, Lines 385-387)

"We had no more medication to give." (N4, Lines 567-570)

It shows Scarcity causes ethical dilemmas. Whether prioritizing the patient who needs the most and the concerning part it cannot benefit all patient making emergency room nurses alter the quality of care to patients. (Al-ghabeesh 2023) emphasizes that Challenges facing nurses employed in the Emergency department, the lack of resources, emphasized the negative consequences of overcrowding in the ED on the quality of care and the safety of patients.

Cluster theme 1.4 Maintaining workplace safety

This theme reveals Emergency room staffs are frequently exposed to physical safety risks including overcrowded workspaces, increasing the potential for injury during high-pressure situations including Verbal abuse and physical assaults from patients and visitors, it is still remaining significant threats to emergency room staffs, creating an unsafe and psychologically distressing work environment. Breakdowns in communication and lack of coordinated team responses contribute to unsafe care environments in emergency departments, especially during high patient volumes or shift changes.

"Security support is limited for substance abuse cases." (Lines 580-585)

Findings cause emergency room nurses risk for their safety, especially handling cases involving substance abuse, making Safety of staff are at risk and can create under-staffed conditions. According to (Dowdell 2022) states Emergency nurses working with patients with opioid use and/or substance use disorders are dealing with a number of negative emotional stressors and frustrations, which in turn has increased their

levels of compassion, fatigue decreasing levels of job satisfaction.

Cluster theme 1.5 Managing patient unpredictability

This theme explores the Patient unpredictability in the emergency room represents a persistent safety and operational challenge, as healthcare workers must continuously adapt to volatile behaviors, sudden clinical deteriorations, or unanticipated patient needs under high-pressure conditions. Ranging from rapid physiological changes to unexpected aggression or disorientation significantly complicates care delivery in emergency departments and increases risks for both staff and other patients.

"Patient with cough collapsed suddenly" (N3, Lines 230-235)

"Critical patients need swift decisions." (N9, Lines 910-914)

"Allergic reaction to tetanus shot was severe." (N10, Lines 995-999)

"We chase time between life and death." (N10, Lines 1086-1088)

"Psychotic patients are unpredictable, which we are at risk" (N7, Lines 677-684)

In such of mental preparation of emergency room nurses, making immediate assessment and quick decision making. That the prioritization defines emergency care is in quality driven, continuously navigate competing clinical priorities, balancing life-threatening emergencies with ongoing care needs, while also managing limited resources, staffing gaps, and frequent interruptions. It is dynamic and influenced by real-time changes in patient status, physician availability, departmental overcrowding, and institutional protocols (Pilleron et. al, 2024). Formal triage protocols, pattern recognition, and situational awareness to prioritize effectively in unpredictable and high-stakes situations.

These insights reflect that emergency room nurses face significant stress when handling psychotic patients due to safety concerns, a lack of specialized training and resources, and the unique challenges of the emergency room. Which can lead to fear and anxiety.

Emergent theme 2: Emotional fortitude

The emergent theme captures the significance of emotional fortitude of emergency room nurses, that speaks to the profound inner strength required not only to provide critical care, but to do so while managing the psychological toll of witnessing suffering, loss, and crisis on a daily basis. Where life-and-death decisions unfold in seconds, emergency nurses stand as pillars of strength and stability. Amid trauma, chaos, and relentless emotional strain, their ability to remain composed, compassionate, and resilient reveals an often-overlooked core attribute: emotional fortitude.

Cluster theme 2.1 Practicing Emotional Regulation

The theme explores of how emergency room nurses enable to manage intense emotion, faced with trauma, critical decision-making, and emotionally charged interactions, Emergency room nurses must control their emotional responses to remain composed, make sound clinical judgments, and provide compassionate care.

"You really have to numb yourself sometimes." (N3, Lines 277-282)

"Emotional connection with patients is heavy." (N9, Lines 1041-1045)

This cluster theme illustrates creating emotional space, creating the capacity to cope up with trauma, suffering, and urgency without becoming emotionally overwhelmed, allowing them to provide effective patient care while preserving their own well-being. (Wilson 2024) states that It supports the idea that setting boundaries between professional identity and personal life contributes to emotional fortitude.

For Empathy that requires a control for nurses, to avoid emotional disturbances, preventing frustration, stress, and conflict of emotions. Murphy (2024) emphasized that the part of managing this kind of events was creating clearer boundaries between work/professional role and personal life.

Cluster theme 2.2 Taking Restorative Stress breaks

This theme shows the effective management and organized personal time, in between works to prevent increased of stress, maintaining the quality of

care of emergency room nurses, also preventing outburst of emotional capacity. These breaks serve as essential coping strategies that help nurses decompress, regain focus maintain professional or work effectiveness.

"Short breaks ease heavy stress." (N3, Lines 272-274)

The theme reflects taking short breaks in between work, regain emotional recovery from stress managing emotional fatigue and physical exhaustion. (Sagherian 2023) found that taking a rest break is not sufficient on itself, what matters is the psychological detachment from the stressor when nurses could detach, rest breaks positively impacted acute fatigue. But when workloads were heavy such that detachment was impossible, the effect disappeared.

Cluster theme 2.3 Establishing personal and professional boundaries

The theme highlights the intentional boundary of establishments and maintenance of emotional, physical, and professional limits that protect their well-being, effective functioning in a high-pressure environment, and Upholding the appropriate emergency room nurse to patient relationships, and maintaining ethical standards despite emotionally charged encounters. Also separating the work from personal life and prevent emotional carryover. This help emergency room nurses manage the emotional intensity, interpersonal demands, and unpredictable nature of emergency care.

"Home is my safe space." (N4, Lines 398-400)

"Encourage separating work and personal life." (N6, Lines 641-643)

illustrates the separation of work and personal life that maintains the balance, while performing duties and the reoccurring stress. (Churnawan 2024) highlights that Emergency room nurses that can maintain a balance and creating boundaries between professional responsibilities and personal life tend to have better mental health, reducing stress and anxiety levels.

Cluster theme 2.4 Engaging in positive coping strategies

This theme highlights how emergency room nurses use constructive strategies, to manage emotional challenges in a health and effective way. Involving actively addressing problems, regulating emotions, and maintaining psychological well-being, rather than avoiding or denying difficulties. Positive

coping enables them to handle high-pressure situations, emotional trauma, and rapid decision-making while protecting their own well-being.

"We laugh off stressful situations" (N4, Lines 417-419)

"Prayer helps during tiring shifts." (N6, Lines 609-612)

The deliberate coping strategy, making humor as a mechanism to divert stressful situation by emergency room nurses. Seeking colleague supports, communicating problems, setting helpful boundaries through work and personal time. This aligns with findings of (wei et. al, 2020), identified social support and time. Also a significant predictor of emotional recovery and resilience in healthcare.

Also faith coping allows emergency room nurses, use of prayer as a spiritual or emotional resource by emergency room nurses to manage stress, emotional distress, and moral challenges in their work environment. For many nurses, prayer provides a sense of peace, purpose, hope, and connection, helping them regulate emotions, maintain resilience, and find meaning in their caregiving role stated by (Cain 2019).

Cluster theme 2.5 Building emotional strength

This theme highlights the importance of emotional structure of the participants, identifying their capacity to endure, manage, and recover from emotional stress, adversity, or trauma while maintaining psychological stability, the effective functioning of the participants and empathy toward patients. It involves emotional regulation, resilience, self-awareness, and the ability to respond constructively to emotionally intense or challenging situations.

"I cried after a newborn death but I still continued to care." (N6, Lines 620-625)

The diversion highlights that even a departed love one, emergency room nurses must still continue to serve others, for the role of the participants involves the balancing professionalism, emotional resilience, and compassion towards patients or even the deceased. Emergency room nurses creates emotional boundaries towards the deceased thinking they still have responsibilities to save others.

Emergent theme 3: Promoting teamwork and Collaboration

The emergent theme "Promoting teamwork and Collaboration" presents, the collaboration and cooperation of emergency room nurses, having the same goal and achieving the same tasks, providing quality care towards patients. Working in a high-pressure environment, involving mutual supports, clear communication, shared decision-making, and trust ensuring that patient care is delivered efficiently. According to (Yaghmaei 2022) states that fostering different personal aspects for teamwork, nurses will be able to deal with unpleasant feelings and experiences as well as contradictory relationships between team members in an effective manner thus give rise to personal growth and maturation during teamwork among them in emergency department.

Cluster theme 3.1 Providing Collegial support

This cluster theme plays a vital role in helping colleagues ease burdens and stress, a supportive communication to colleagues promotes a **culture of care**, reduces stigma around emotional expression, and regains personal strength. Also increase work satisfaction, improve teamwork and safety, and reduce burnout and compassion fatigue of emergency room nurses.

"Having a support system is important." (N1, Lines 58-61).

This perspective allows emergency room nurses seeks guidance and assistance to their colleagues, seniors, and supervisors for boost of confidence, encouragement and shared workload during stressful shifts, managing stress or burnout. (Abdelallem 2024) emphasizes that emergency departments can positively or negatively influence the work environment and level of work-related stress. There is a necessity to cultivate a supportive culture for nurses in emergency departments to develop skills for constructive conflict management styles.

Cluster theme 3.2 Engaging in Collaboration

This theme emphasizes emergency room nurses collaboration during patient care, achieving with the same goals and tasks. It involves open communication, mutual respect, shared decision-making, and the integration of each team member's skills and knowledge to respond efficiently to complex and rapidly changing clinical situations.

"Teamwork and collaboration improve patient-care"
(N7, Lines 787-794)

This reflects the participants' perception of collaboration, achieving team unity that can foster effective performance all throughout care to the patient. According to (Nobahar 2023) states that Challenging experiences of emergency room nurses give rise to personal growth and maturation during teamwork among them in the emergency department.

Cluster theme 3.3 Enhancing Team communication

The theme reflects how emergency room nurses, build relationships to increase productivity through communications, reduce misunderstandings, and foster a more engaged and harmonious workplace. This also includes the offering of empathetic listening, sharing coping strategies, and providing practical help during shifts, and fostering a sense of camaraderie and trust.

"Communication is key to manage stress." (N2, Lines 207-210)

"Helping burned-out colleagues lessens burden."
(N7, Lines 796-801)

It includes emotional reassurance, practical help, and shared coping strategies. Peer communications serves as a vital protective factor against burnout, compassion fatigue, reinforces a culture of shared responsibility and mutual respect.

This perspective shows that communication is a very important key to emergency room nurses, transferring data of patient, relaying orders, transferring reports next shifts, but communication within colleagues is also a very vital component, that can build trust, relieves emotional burden. According to (Yaghmaei 2023) it can fosters connection each one of emergency room nurses and also promotes unity within the team.

Cluster theme 3.4 Strengthening Team coordination

Team coordination captures emergency room nurses, organized alignment and synchronization of activities, roles, and communication within the team to efficiently manage patient care tasks in the dynamic, fast-paced environment of the emergency room.

"Community and cooperation make work easier" (N1, Lines 78-80)

"Lack of staff requires teamwork." (N9, Lines 921-923)

Aligning and integrating the work of emergency room nurses, knowledge of each interdependent team members to achieve shared goals efficiently. Involving clear planning, seamless integration of activities, and continuous communication of the team that to ensure everyone is working together harmoniously and has a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

Emergency room Nurses must rely on each other to complete critical interventions, monitor patients, and manage documentation. With team solidarity it will reduce stress, frustration, and moral distress in high-pressure short-staffed situations in the emergency room. According to (Mccarthy et. al, 2009) it found that short staffing contributed to overcrowding, longer patient wait times, and compromised quality of care to patients.

Cluster theme 3.5 Fostering social support

This theme establishes support of colleagues to emotional, and professional assistance that nursing peers provide to one another within the emergency department. This support fosters collaborative work for emergency room nurses in their environment by promoting mutual encouragement, shared problem-solving, and the provision of assistance to their colleagues.

"I rely on colleagues for support." (N8, Lines 876-878)

"We help colleagues when one struggles." (N9, Lines 1018-1020)

Relying on colleagues also play a big factor in the emergency room, you can communicate with them, verbalize your problem, and establishes trust towards them. It strengthens team, improves clinical performance, and promotes a psychologically safe work culture among staff. Relying on colleagues can Foster work environment where mutual respect and trust are prioritized (Owusu et. al, 2025).

It also highlights the importance of unity, helping one another, involving one another. To achieve shared goals in the patient-care processes, this can boost morale among emergency room nurses. (Williams 2022) states that Teamwork is a complex and multifaceted, but communication between team members is fundamental to performance.

Emergent theme 4: Reflective growth

This emergent theme features the continuing education of the profession, through experience or in a formal education, examining emotions, actions and performance in the clinical environment to gain insight, improve practice, and enhance professional and personal development. it well help emergency room nurses learn from high-stakes, fast paced environment and apply that learning to improve patient care, communication and over all status in the work environment.

Cluster theme 4.1 Engaging in Continuous Learning

It highlights the regular updating and expanding of clinical knowledge and practical abilities to provide safe, effective, and evidence-based patient care, especially improving or increasing skills in application of quality patient-care.

“Continuing education is essential.” (N2, Lines 547-548)

“Continuing education boosts confidence.” (N5, Lines 546-552)

This theme encourages emergency room nurses to continue education for professional improvement and development that can benefit their commitment to patient-care and improve knowledge. It is also a cornerstone of nursing practice. (Seal 2024) added that it allows emergency room nurses to stay current with the latest evidence-based protocols, ensuring delivery of the safest and most effective care.

Knowledge development improves patient outcomes. (Seal 2024) emphasizes that continuing medical education is the best way for nursing professionals to stay current and keep their skills sharp. Nurses should prioritize Continuing education to gain relevant education, professional development, personal growth and knowledge of specialty areas that lead to meeting evolving license requirements.

Cluster theme 4.2 Demonstrating peer empathy

This cluster theme defines the capacity of Emergency room nurses to understand and share the thoughts, feelings, and perspectives of their colleagues. It is the foundation of peer support, involves the intellectual understanding of another nurse's situation and feelings. Also allows Emergency room nurses to offer and receive emotional support to manage daily pressures and cope with traumatic events.

“We check on each other” (N3, Lines 285-289)

Cluster theme 4.3 Pursuing Skill mastery

This cluster theme illustrates the achievement of highly proficient, intuitive, and fluid performance in the fast-paced, complex, and unpredictable Emergency room settings. It goes beyond basic competence by integrating extensive clinical experience of emergency room nurses.

“Learned how to prioritize and stay calm.” (N5, Lines 847-848)

A reflection that serves the Peer empathy strengthens emotional health towards emergency room nurses, (Alonso et al, 2025) describe the implementation and benefits of psychosocial peer support programs in healthcare settings, particularly focusing on addressing mental health and burnout among frontline workers. illustrates the Experience that can build professionalism towards emergency room nurses. According to (Zhuang 2023) states that higher resiliency is the ability to adapt and recover from adversity, it is directly linked to staying calm and is crucial for nurse retention and career satisfaction.

Cluster theme 4.4 Utilizing Therapeutic Communication

This cluster theme gives the reflection of the purposeful, interpersonal exchange of verbal and non-verbal messages of emergency room nurses, which focuses on a patient's physical and emotional well-being. Gather essential information, provide support, and manage crisis situations it differs from casual conversation because every interaction is guided by a specific goal.

“Explaining intubation to watchers is hard.” (N10, Lines 1011-1015)

Direct and therapeutic Communication are essential in emergency situations, that watchers or

significant others gives the consent to allow the healthcare team to perform an invasive procedure in order to save the patient. By approaching them in a calm, and accurately explain the procedure.

(Sharma 2023) added that it is a crucial role of therapeutic communication for Emergency Room nurses, particularly during invasive procedures like endotracheal intubation. Highlights the need for effective, alternative communication strategies to reduce patient distress and improve outcomes.

Cluster theme 4.5 Advancing Professional growth

This theme highlights the ongoing process of improving the skills, knowledge, and abilities to enhance the practice and advance careers within the challenging and dynamic emergency setting. Through experience and specialized training, Emergency room nurses pursue higher education or specialized certifications to validate their expertise and open doors for career advancement.

“Training and seminars enhance growth.” (N9, Lines 213-215)

Handling difficult and different patients is very critical that it allows deeper patience towards them, a critical skill of emergency room nurses that must be learned, prioritizing the safety of both staff and patients while ensuring the necessary medical care is delivered despite the behavioral challenges. (Wu 2021) stated that Emergency room nurses build rapport quickly by listening, showing empathy, and explaining care in simple, non-medical term and acknowledging the patients’ feelings.

“Different patient attitudes challenge triage fairness” (N6, Lines 573-575)

Emergent theme 5: Valuing

This theme highlights the dimension of spirituality that helps them find meaning and purpose of their vocation and to their challenging work. Faith and well-being Acts as a protective factor against the high levels of stress and anxiety. If integrated into their daily lives and work, faith can significantly improve the overall well-being of Emergency room nurses. Connecting their work to a higher purpose, whether it is service to a higher power or simply helping others, can make demanding work more meaningful and fulfilling.

Cluster theme 5.1 Managing behavioral challenge

“Mentally unstable patients are difficult to manage.” (N4, Lines 410-413)

This theme conveys the defined range of emotional, psychological, and interpersonal responses that negatively affect their performance, well-being, and the overall quality of patient care. These challenges can be a consequence of the intense and chaotic working conditions, including long hours.

Separation from stress preserves mental health, (Hao 2025) States that, it is also crucial to enhance support from family and friends for emergency room nurses in their personal and professional endeavors. Thus support from nurse managers should facilitate the adoption of positive coping styles to effectively address challenges and managing work-life balance of staffs.

Emergency room nurses tries to manage their own emotional reactions, enable self-awareness, seeking assistance or communicate to colleagues provides a sense of security and support. Knowledge and skills and strengthening team responses toward violence are urgent needs for emergency department nurses (Tseng 2020).

Cluster theme 5.2 Practicing mental health management

This theme illustrates comprehensive approach that includes a mix of individual-level coping strategies and systematic, organizational interventions. Emergency room nurses must focus on the three primary areas providing direct psychological interventions, enhancing coping skills, and alleviating workplace stressors.

“Coffee and prayers... stay calm and relaxed.” (N1, Lines 42-45)

“Mental health support is important.” (N2, Lines 176-180)

“Work-life balance is important.” (N5, Lines 42-45)

These kinds of personal coping methods of emergency room nurses could be a personal resource of preserving energy, taking short breaks, give a physical boost providing quality care to their patients. (Wallace 2025) added taking regular breaks are crucial for mental and physical recharge. Even a short five-

minute break from the chaos can help reset your mind and reduce burnout.

These themes shows the importance of mental health support, increase workshops and mental health programs for the department for alleviation of stress. Practical programs that alleviate psychological distress are essential for enhancing the mental well-being of nurses, which in turn can mitigate the potential adverse effects on the quality of emergency care (Jiang 2025).

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Emergency room nurses tries to manage their own emotional reactions, enable self-awareness, seeking assistance or communicate to colleagues provides a sense of security and support. Knowledge and skills and strengthening team responses toward violence are urgent needs for emergency department nurses (Tseng 2020).

Cluster theme 5.3 Promoting Staff well-being

This theme highlights a holistic state of physical, mental, and emotional health that allows them to thrive despite the unique and constant stressors of their work. Unlike the well-being of the general workforce, Emergency room nurse well-being is defined by an individual's resilience in the face of frequent trauma. Influences their job satisfaction, performance, and ability to provide safe, high-quality patient care.

“Mental health support vital to prevent burnout.” (N7, Lines 677-684)

This acknowledges the compassion of emergency room nurses that they are in need of mental health support, and they are at risk of fatigue and burnout, losing the sense of their vocation. The effective mental health support from nurse managers that requires a combination of strategies to build resilience, enhancing coping skills, and also detect systemic workplace stressors of staffs (Jiang 2025).

Cluster theme 5.4 Demonstrating empathy

This theme highlights the ability of emergency room nurses to understand and accurately acknowledge a patient's feelings and perspective, and then communicate that understanding to them. For Emergency room nurses, maintaining empathy can be challenging due to high stress, heavy workloads, and the need for quick decision-making, but it is vital for both patient outcomes and the nurse's own well-being.

“CVA cases reminded me of my family history.” (N8, Lines 833-840)

This insight conveys Personal link that can strengthens emergency room nurses empathy. According to (Hannan 2019) nurses in emotionally intense environments rarely respond with empathy because these busy, intense environments make empathetic communication challenging. Some of the nurses lack empathy training making it more challenging to respond using empathy, even nurses assigned in the emergency room.

Cluster theme 5.5 Embracing vocational calling

This theme shows a profound, deeply personal sense of purpose that goes beyond a job or career. It is an inner drive to devote oneself to serving people during their most urgent, vulnerable, and often traumatic moments. This calling provides Emergency room nurses with a humane and holistic orientation to their work, allowing them to remain present, empathetic, and engaged to their profession.

“Prayer and positivity overcome stress.” (N10, Lines 1036-1038)

“Be an angel in the sickroom.” (N10, Lines 1070-1071)

Showing a reminder of the vocation and the calling of emergency room nurses (Kallio 2022) states that Nurses with a calling experienced their work as meaningful. They also adopted a humane and holistic approach to their work. It meant nurses had an oppressed position in society and nurses associated it with poor working conditions and low pay.

Recommendations for future researcher

Future research on emergency room nurses study implicate that emergency room nurses, must operate a highly effective triage system, as the high

patient load and limited resources in public hospitals mean they cannot provide immediate care to every patient. This requires exceptional prioritization skills to distinguish between life-threatening conditions and non-urgent cases. The implication for practice is that nurses must have advanced training and continuous education on proper triage protocols to ensure optimal patient outcomes.

Shortages of staff, essential medical equipment, and basic supplies, ER nurses must become highly resourceful. This implies nurses must be creative in using the available resources to provide the best possible care, which may mean improvising or navigating hospital-wide shortages. Relying on one's own clinical judgment and creativity is necessary, but also carries inherent risks without proper institutional support.

The overwhelming patient volume and limited space often prevent nurses from providing holistic, patient-centered care. The implication is that nurses often focus on immediate, life-sustaining tasks, which can create emotional distance and frustration for both the nurse and the patient. Practice should focus on adapting to this environment by finding small ways to provide compassionate, person-centered care even amid chaos and intense workload.

Given the wide array of emergency cases and limited specialist support in many government hospitals, Emergency room nurses must be perpetual learners. This implies a need for continuing professional development that covers a broad scope of emergency scenarios, including advanced trauma care, cardiology, and disaster management. Continuing education helps nurses maintain competency, which is especially important in environments where there may be a lack of senior staff or specialists.

The combination of high workload, understaffing, and exposure to critical and often fatal cases can lead to extreme stress and burnout. This implies a need for institutional and personal strategies to manage emotional and mental strain, such as: Support services should be provided to help nurses process the emotional burden of their work, resilience program focusing on developing coping mechanisms to handle stressful situations effectively.

Government hospitals are often on the front lines of healthcare system failures, including underfunding and resource scarcity. A key implication for practice is that they must act as advocates for both their patients and themselves. Participation in discussions with hospital and government

administrators can help drive policy changes that improve staffing and resource allocation.

Emergency room nurses frequently face ethical dilemmas regarding the equitable distribution of scarce resources, such as ventilators, medications, or beds, particularly during mass casualty incidents or public health crises. This implies a need for a strong ethical framework and clear institutional guidelines to guide decision-making during resource rationing. Nurses must ensure decisions are based on clinical need and protocol rather than emotion, to preserve the principles of fairness and justice.

A state where nurses know the ethically correct action but are constrained from taking it. The implication for practice is recognizing and addressing this emotional labor. Fostering a supportive team environment where ethical concerns can be discussed openly is vital for preventing burnout and supporting mental health.

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