

Student Name: Vera Asimah Ackah
School of Nursing, University of Ghana, Legon
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ABSTRACT

Working in an operating room requires a great deal of attention to detail since ensuring patient safety is a top priority, which makes this setting closely linked to increased stress. In the operating theatres of the healthcare setting, stress and its adverse effects are experienced by nurses who play a crucial role in the provision of healthcare. Physical, emotional, social, and spiritual changes may emerge from the stress operating theatre nurses experience in this environment. This study sought to explore the effect of occupational stress among operating room nurses. The study employed a qualitative exploratory descriptive design. Using a purposive sampling method, 12 operating room nurses was selected from a Teaching Hospital. Data was collected using a semi-structured interview guide and analysed using thematic analysis. This study revealed negative effects of stress among operating theatre nurses which were psychological, physiological and functional disability. The psychological effects included confusion and lack of focus. Also, theatre-related stressors led to interference with work and delays in work progress, sickness offs and absenteeism among the operating theatre nurses. Nurses are susceptible to job stress in operating rooms. The numerous stressors operating room nurses encounter can have both beneficial and detrimental effects on them. Positively, theatre nurses appear be resilient as a result of their constant exposure to stressors. But stress negatively affects their psychological and physical health as well as their capacity for function. For the purpose of providing high-quality healthcare, it is essential to equip operating theatre nurses with effective behavioural coping strategies.