Research Paper medical science

The impact of shift work on sexual satisfaction perceived by nurses

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ABSTRACT

Background. The aim of the study was the analysis of the impact of 12-hour shift work system on sexual satisfaction perceived by 200 nurses. The subjects in a partnership. Method used was Davis Sexual Satisfaction Scale.
Results. The mean age of the subjects was 40.47 years, the average work experience in shift work was 12.59 years. The overall level of sexual satisfaction was quite good, the highest results were in the physical realm. The overall indicator of perceived sexual satisfaction decreased with age and years of work experience.
Conclusions. Shift work significantly reduces the quality of sexual life in nurses, which in turn can lead to decrease in global quality of life. Therefore, further research are necessary to help understand better the mutual correlation between the work of nurses and factors that may have a positive impact on eliminating the negative consequences of shift work.

Introduction

Despite numerous papers devoted to human sexuality, there is lack of unified definition of sexual satisfaction. Generally, it is understood as satisfaction with one's intimate life. According to Interpersonal Exchange Model of Sexual Satisfaction by Lawrence & Byers, sexual satisfaction is determined by four factors: the balance between the benefits and costs associated with being in a sexual relationship with another person, the balance of benefits and costs compared with expectations of a person, perceived equality between the benefits and the costs incurred between both partners and the quality of non-sexual aspects of the relationship [1].

Among the factors determining sexual satisfaction are: age, gender, mood, physical wellness, level of fatigue, etc. Undoubtedly, the perceived level of fatigue is influenced by the system of work. In the literature, there are numerous studies indicating a significant association between shift work and the impact on different spheres of human activity: social (weakening of family ties, less participation in social and cultural life) and biological (whereas there is no clear association between diseases and shift work). A retrospective review of research carried out by Shariat et al. (2015) indicated a correlation between night work and health problems ie. fragmented daytime sleep; Increased risks of developing cardiovascular, gastroenterological, hematological and immunological disorders; increased risk of suffering from metabolic syndrome and diabetes mellitus; and the development of obesity [2].

In the case of women, shift work affects the smaller number of pregnancies and involves the risk of metabolic syndrome [3,4,5]. The disturbances in the menstrual rhythm and an increase in menstrual ailments can also occur [6]. Long-term shift work may contribute to the higher incidence of cancer [7,8,9].

The vast majority of the works analyze the impact of work on the incidence of somatic problems, only few deal with the correlation between the nature of work and worker's sexual satisfaction.

Aim

The aim of the study was the analysis of the impact of 12-hour shift work system on sexual satisfaction perceived by nurses.

Material and methods

The research group consisted of 200 nurses in a partnership, working in the system of 12-hour shifts. The subjects came from the Malopolska province, Poland and expressed informed consent to participate in the study. The research was conducted in the period from January to April 2015.

Method used was Davis Sexual Satisfaction Scale (2006). The scale defines three levels of sexual satisfaction: physical satisfaction, emotional satisfaction and satisfaction resulting from the sense of control. The physical one includes a subjective feeling of pleasure from sexual intercourse and a sense of physical fulfillment and sexual abilities of a partner. The emotional aspect refers to feelings towards the partner, however, the emotional level is related to the level of satisfaction with the relationship as a whole. The feeling of satisfaction resulting from a sense of control refers to the assessment of one's own impact on whether the intercourse will be possible and if so when [20].

Complete data was calculated by means of IBM SPSS Statistics 20 software, the level of statistical significance was adopted at $p < 0.05$.

Results

The mean age of the subjects was 40.47 years (SD=7.49), the average work seniority in shift work was 12.59 years (SD = 7.66). The work seniority in shift work ranged from 1 year to 33 years. The present study showed that the average level of sexual satisfaction amounted to 72.13 points (SD = 8.97). The nurses presented higher level of satisfaction in the sphere of physical satisfaction (26.84), lower in the emotional satisfaction (23.88) and the lowest one in the sense of control (21.42) Tab.I.

Tab.I. Characteristics of the study group.

Analyzed variables	x±s	Min-max
Age	40.47±7.49	24-53
Work seniority	12.59±7.66	1-33
Level of sexual satisfaction	72.13±8,97	46-96
Subscale- physical satisfaction	26.84±5.73	13-35
Subscale- emotional satisfaction	23.88±4.65	10-35
Subscale- sense of control	21.42±2.97	13-32

A clear relationship between the subjects' age and sexual satisfaction was proved. The overall indicator of perceived sexual satisfaction decreased with nurses' age. In addition, the subscale - physical satisfaction also decreased with nurses' age . No significant relation was found between the age of the respondents and the subscales - emotional satisfaction and satisfaction with the sense of control.

Apart from age, work seniority had a significant impact on the sexual sphere of the respondents. With the increase in seniority in shift work decreased overall sexual satisfaction scores and physical satisfaction. However, work seniority of nurses did not significantly differentiated emotional satisfaction or satisfaction with a sense of control - Table II.

Table II. The correlation between the level of sexual satisfaction and age and seniority in shift work.

Spearman's rho correlation coeficient		Age	Seniority in shift work	Level of sexual satisfaction	Subscale-physical satisfaction	Subscale-emotional satisfaction	Subscale- sense of control
Age	Rho	1.000	.840	-.235	-.225	-.107	.036
	P		0.0000	0.0008	0.0014	0.1328	0.6098
Seniority in shift work	Rho	.840	1.000	-.172	-.216	-.040	.131
	P	0.0000		0.0348	0.0079	0.6245	0.1106
Level of sexual satisfaction	Rho	-.235	-.172	1.000	.675	.627	.616
	P	0.0008	0.0348		0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Subscale-physical satisfaction	Rho	-.225	-.216	.675	1.000	.024	.155
	P	0.0014	0.0079	0.0000		0.7310	0.0286
Subscale- emotional satisfaction	Rho	-.107	-.040	.627	.024	1.000	.377
	P	0.1328	0.6245	0.0000	0.7310		0.0000
Subscale- sense of control	Rho	.036	.131	.616	.155	.377	1.000
	P	0.6098	0.1106	0.0000	0.0286	0.0000	

Discussion

Innovative's own research has shown a clear link between age and years of shift work seniority and lower satisfaction with sex life in nurses. Lin research among nurses in Taiwan, showed that in 51.9% of them during shift work occurred one disorder of sexual desire and 68.85% had experienced more than one sexual dysfunction [10]. Interesting observations was put forward by Lee et al., who researched a group of 100 married nurses and studied the effect of stress at nursing work on the quality of sex life. They found that gender and age were inversely correlated, while satisfaction with sex life and sexual desire were correlated positively. They explain this fact that among the nurses who are satisfied with their work both financially and immaterial way, stress does not affect the quality of sexual life [11]. Numerous studies confirm that among the medical professions particularly high levels of stress accompanies the work of nurses, hence they are classified at risk of professional burnout syndrome [12,13,14]. Thus, some authors postulate that satisfying sex life contributes to good quality of life which reduces the possibility of burnout syndrome [15].

Conclusions

1. Shift work significantly reduces the quality of sex life in nurses.
2. Age and seniority in shifts have a negative impact on the overall level of sexual satisfaction and the subscale of physical satisfaction.
3. Shift work and age have no significant effect on the emotional sphere and a sense of control of sexual act.

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