

# The Relationship Between Serenity and Burnout Among Nurses



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## INTRODUCTION

*Our health care system is in the midst of a nursing shortage crisis that is expected to intensify. Burnout is a serious problem that is closely related to nurses abandoning the profession. Burnout has a direct effect on physical and psychological health, and deterioration of nurse-patient relationships, nurse-peer relationships, and relationships of the nurse to his/her family and environment. A correlation between spirituality and coping ability has been consistently demonstrated. Serenity relates to the concept of spirituality. There is currently no research examining the relationship of serenity to nurses' ability to cope with work related distress and burnout.*

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

*The concept of Serenity guided the development of this study. Serenity is defined as a learned, positive emotion of inner peace that can be sustained, decreases perceived stress, and improves physical and emotional health. Serenity (Roberts & Whall, 1996) is experienced in relation to development of the higher self.*

## RESULTS

*Findings from the pilot study demonstrated a significant inverse correlation ( $r = -.537$ ,  $p = .01$ ) between serenity and burnout among nurses, however, these findings were limited by the use of a convenience sample that was not geographically and educationally representative of the National Registered Nurse Population. Findings from the current study, which draws upon a national, randomized sample of registered nurses, are pending.*

## PURPOSE

*Serenity relates to the concept of spirituality.*

*The purpose of this study is to expand upon a pilot study conducted by these authors to investigate the relationship between serenity and burnout among nurses.*

## METHODS

*A cross-sectional correlational research design will be utilized to build upon findings of a pilot study conducted by these authors.*

*The pilot study convenience sample consisted of 609 registered nurses (RNs) who were on the active membership roster of the Kappa Gamma Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International at the time of the study. The current study utilizes a randomized sample of 2500 RNs representing fifty states in the U.S.*

*Instruments: the Maslach Burnout Inventory which consists of 22 questions and records three dimensions of burnout; and the Serenity Scale, a 40 item self report summated scale that evaluates serenity status based on ten critical attributes.*

## Conclusions & Implications

*Findings of this study hold valuable implications for nursing. Knowledge about serenity can help nurses cope with the stresses of practice thereby decreasing the experience of burnout. Interventions aimed at revising nursing education to include the concept of Serenity as an organizing framework may increase nurses' ability to cope with work related distress and decrease the number of nurses forced to leave the profession.*

S E R E N I T Y

The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams