

Nurses' Emotional Management in Conflict and Catastrophe's Humanitarian Aid Projects

Tânia, Almeida¹

 <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-6611-2708>

Paula, Diogo²

 <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-4828-3452>

Lúisa Barros³

 <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-5075-0104>

¹ Departamento Criança e Jovem, Escola Superior de Enfermagem de Lisboa (ESEL), Lisboa; Centro de Investigação, Inovação e Desenvolvimento em Enfermagem de Lisboa (CIDNUR), Lisboa, Portugal.

² Departamento Criança e Jovem, Escola Superior de Enfermagem de Lisboa (ESEL), Lisboa; Centro de Investigação, Inovação e Desenvolvimento em Enfermagem de Lisboa (CIDNUR), Lisboa, Portugal.

³ Universidade de Psicologia de Lisboa, Lisboa, Portugal.

Introduction

The emotional management processes of nurses working in international humanitarian aid projects, particularly in conflict and/or catastrophe contexts, are critical due to the significant emotional challenges they face. These professionals encounter diverse emotions and often must make decisions in adverse, culturally diverse, and resource-scarce environments. Watson¹ highlights that caregivers who neglect self-care cannot provide the necessary care for their patients or to offer serenity, affection, safety, and understanding. Therefore, understanding the emotional management strategies that nurses employ in these demanding contexts is essential.

Objective

This study aims to describe the major categories that emerged from the preliminary findings of a research conducted as part of a PhD in Nursing to understand the nurses' emotional management processes when providing care in the context of international humanitarian aid, specifically in conflict or catastrophe scenarios.

Methods

This study follows a naturalistic paradigm using the Grounded Theory method with an inductive approach. Content analysis was conducted on eleven written narratives and two focus group reports from nurses with experience in these contexts.

Results

The findings revealed three phases in the emotional management of nurses providing care in this context. Consequently, three main categories were defined. The first category, *Challenging Emotional Situation*, refers to the period before the mission. The second, *Turbulent Emotional Situation*, covers the mission itself, and the third, *Search for Self-Meaning*, pertains to the post-mission phase.

Conclusion

The ongoing results of this study suggest that appropriate emotional management strategies not only improve nurses' well-being but also enhance their ability to provide empathetically and competent care in adverse conditions. A deeper understanding of these processes will enable more effective preparation through targeted training. This deeper knowledge, driven by extensive research, will improve nurses' readiness for missions, equipping them to handle challenging contexts and situations more effectively.

Keywords

Emotions; Nursing; Humanitarian Aid; Catastrophe; Conflict.

References

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Corresponding author:

Tânia Almeida

E-mail: tania-almeida@esel.pt

