Prevalence of moral distress among hospital nurses and its association with job retention

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Keywords:
Moral distress
Nursing manpower
Retention
Care ethics
Job satisfaction
Burnout

Introduction
High nursing staff turnover has been a global problem, and Hong Kong is no exception.Literature suggests that moral distress which means the health care providers perceived themselves unable to provide the ethically appropriate care is contributing to burnout and poor job satisfaction, in addition to heavy clinical workload. However, little attention has been given to this phenomenon in the local situation.

Objectives
This study aimed to examine the prevalence of moral distress and its association with job retention among nurses in Hong Kong

Methodology
A cross-sectional correlation study was conducted. All nurses who were working in adult wards and involved in direct patient care were eligible to the study. Self-administered questionnaires, which consisted of Moral Distress Scale-Revised (MDS-R), Hospital Ethical Climate Scale and Intention to leave, were distributed to the potential respondents. All participation is on a voluntary and anonymous basis. SPSS 22.0 was used for statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the demographic characteristics and variables. Logistic regression analysis was conducted to examine the association between moral distress and the intention to leave. All analysis was considered as significant at 0.05. Ethics approval for the study was obtained from the research ethics committees.

Result
A total of 475 completed questionnaires, giving a response rate of 53.2%. Two thirds of the respondents were female and most of them were in the age group 26-30 (41.3%), had obtained bachelor degree (58.4%) and currently in the rank of registered nurse (79.6%). The mean MDS-R score was 77.13 (SD 44.02), with the highest

scores among those worked in oncology wards, surgical wards and medical wards. Around half of the respondents (46.8%) were considering leaving the current position due to moral distress, and their MDS-R scores were significantly higher than those who were not considered leaving (p