



A Study to Assess the Level of Stress among Nurses Working In Selected Hospitals of Kashmir

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Article history: Received: 18 June. 2025, Reviewed on: 03 July 2025, Published online: 15 July, 2025

ABSTRACT

Background: Nurses play a vital role in the healthcare system and are frequently exposed to physically demanding tasks, emotional strain, and unpredictable work environments. Prolonged exposure to such stressors can negatively affect their mental health, job satisfaction, and the quality of patient care they deliver. This study was conducted to assess the level of stress among nurses working in selected hospitals of Kashmir.

Aim: To assess the level of stress among nurses and to determine the association between stress levels and socio-demographic variables.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 100 registered nurses selected through stratified random sampling technique from various government and private hospitals in Kashmir. Data were collected using a structured socio-demographic questionnaire and the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS). Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data.

Results: This study shows that majority of staff nurses are exposed to severe levels of stress. The quantum of exposure to stress is inversely proportional to their caring behaviors. Conflicts with colleagues, co-workers, doctors, administrators and supervisors and uncertainty with respect to outcome of the treatment enhances occupational stress.

Conclusion: The study highlights that nurses in Kashmir are experiencing considerable occupational stress. There is a need for effective stress management strategies, supportive work environments, and regular mental health assessments to ensure the well-being of nursing staff and enhance patient care outcomes.

Keywords: Nurses, Stress, Kashmir, Hospital, Occupational stress, Perceived Stress Scale

INTRODUCTION

Nursing, the backbone of any healthcare system, is widely recognized as a high-stress profession due to its demanding nature. Nurses are consistently required to work in fast-paced environments where they manage critical patient care, perform technical procedures, and deal with emotionally charged situations involving pain, trauma, and death. The constant exposure to such stressors can significantly affect nurses' physical and psychological well-being, leading to burnout, absenteeism, and reduced quality of patient care [1].

The global nursing workforce is experiencing rising stress levels due to multiple factors, including increased workload, staff shortages, extended working hours, lack of managerial support, and poor nurse-patient ratios [2]. In developing countries like India, and particularly in conflict-affected regions such as Kashmir, these issues are even more pronounced. The healthcare system in Kashmir is often strained due to political instability, infrastructure limitations, and inconsistent staffing, all of which add additional psychological burdens on the nursing staff [3].

Workplace stress not only affects the individual nurse but also compromises patient safety, increases medical errors, and affects organizational productivity. Studies have shown that stress among nurses is associated with physical symptoms such as fatigue, headaches, and gastrointestinal disturbances, as well as mental health issues like anxiety, depression, and irritability [4,5]. Long-term exposure to stress may lead to professional burnout, emotional exhaustion, and even attrition from the nursing profession [6].

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