

A Cross-Sectional Study on Occupational Stress Levels Among Staff Nurses Working in Selected Hospitals of Rajouri District, Jammu and Kashmir

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Abstract- Background: Occupational stress is a significant concern in the nursing profession, particularly in developing regions where healthcare systems are often overburdened. Nurses, as frontline caregivers, are exposed to a multitude of stressors including high patient loads, emotional demands, shift work, and limited administrative support. These stressors can adversely affect their physical and psychological well-being, job satisfaction, and quality of patient care¹⁻³. **Objectives:** The present cross-sectional study was conducted among staff nurses working in selected hospitals of Rajouri district, Jammu and Kashmir to assess their occupational stress levels and to find out the association between occupational stress and selected demographic variables. **Materials & Methods:** The study was conducted in October 2018 among 120 staff nurses selected through Convenience sampling. Data were collected using the Occupational Stress Index⁴. Both Descriptive and inferential statistics were used. **Results:** The findings revealed that 62.5% of nurses experienced moderate stress, 21.7% high stress, and 15.8% low stress. Significant associations were observed between stress levels and years of experience ($p=0.03$) and work shift ($p=0.01$). **Conclusion:** The study highlights a high prevalence of occupational stress among nurses in Rajouri, underscoring the need for institutional strategies such as stress management training, supportive supervision, and improved staffing policies to enhance nurse well-being and patient care outcomes.

Keywords: Occupational Stress, OSI, Staff Nurses, Hospitals, Cross-sectional study, Job satisfaction.

INTRODUCTION

Stress related Physical and emotional reactions that arise when workplace demands do not align with an employee's requirements, resources, or talents are known as occupational stress. The detrimental physical and emotional reactions that arise when

workplace demands do not align with an employee's requirements, resources, or talents are known as occupational stress⁵. Among healthcare professionals, nurses are particularly vulnerable due to the nature of their work, which involves continuous patient interaction, emotional labour, and high responsibility under time constraints⁶. The World Health Organization recognizes occupational stress as a global health issue, with nurses frequently reporting higher stress levels compared to other healthcare workers⁷. In India, the nurse-to-patient ratio remains suboptimal, especially in rural and semi-urban areas like Rajouri district in Jammu and Kashmir. Nurses in such settings often face additional challenges including understaffing, lack of resources, and limited professional development opportunities⁸. These factors contribute to chronic stress, which can manifest as burnout, absenteeism, reduced job satisfaction, and compromised patient care⁹. Previous studies have identified key stressors in nursing such as workload, role ambiguity, interpersonal conflicts, and inadequate administrative support¹⁰⁻¹². However, there is a paucity of region-specific data, particularly from conflict-prone and underserved areas like Rajouri. This study seeks to bridge that gap by assessing the level of occupational stress among staff nurses in selected hospitals of the district and exploring its association with demographic and work-related variables.

OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the occupational stress levels among staff nurses.
2. To find out the association between the occupational stress levels and selected demographical variables.

METHODOLOGY

Study Design: Cross-sectional, Descriptive study.

Setting: Selected government and private hospitals in Rajouri district.

Samples and Sampling: 120 staff nurses selected through Convenience sampling.

Tool(s): Tool A: Demographic profile, Tool B: Occupational Stress Index (Srivastava & Singh, 1981).

Data Collection: One month, from 01 October to 31 October, 2018.

Statistical Analysis: SPSS v20. Descriptive statistics like mean, SD, frequency, percentage and Inferential statistics such as Chi-square were used.

RESULTS

Demographic Profile:

Table 1. Categorical Demographic data among Staff Nurses

(N = 120)			
Variables	Category	f	%
Age (years)	21–30 yrs.	48	40.0
	31–40 yrs.	52	43.3
	>40 yrs.	20	16.7
Gender	Female	94	78.3
	Male	26	21.7
Marital Status	Married	75	62.5
	Single	45	37.5
Educational Qualification	Diploma (GNM)	66	55.0
	Post Basic/BSc Nursing	42	35.0
	MSc Nursing & Above	12	10.0
Department	Medical	36	30.0
	Surgical	30	25.0
	ICU	24	20.0
	Pediatrics	18	15.0
	OPD	12	10.0
Residence	Urban	66	55.0
	Rural	54	45.0
Type of Family	Nuclear	78	65.0
	Joint	42	35.0
Years of Experience	1–5 years	51	42.5
	6–10 years	42	35.0
	>10 years	27	22.5
Work Shift	Rotational	78	65.0
	Fixed	42	35.0
Employment Type	Permanent	82	68.3
	Contractual	38	31.7

Monthly Income (INR)	Up to 20,000 Rs.	36	30.0
	20,001–30,000 Rs.	54	45.0
	Above 30,000 Rs.	30	25.0

- Mean age: 31.4 ± 5.7 years
- Gender: 78.3% female, 21.7% male
- Experience: 42.5% had 1–5 years, 35% had 6–10 years, 22.5% >10 years
- Shift pattern: 65% rotational, 35% fixed

Occupational Stress Levels:

Table 2: Distribution of Occupational Stress Levels among Staff Nurses

(N=120)

Occupational Stress Levels	f	(%)	Mean	SD
Low	19	15.8	142.6	± 18.3
Moderate	75	62.5		
High	26	21.7		
Total	120	100		

Low: 15.8%

- Moderate: 62.5%
- High: 21.7%
- Mean OSI score: 142.6 ± 18.3
- The findings reveal a moderate level of Occupational stress among staff nurses in Rajouri.

Inferential Findings:

Table 3: Association Between Stress Level and Selected Variables

Variables	χ^2 Value	df	p-value
Years of Experience	7.14	2	0.03*
Work Shift	6.72	1	0.01*

*Significant at $p < 0.05$

- Significant association observed between Occupational stress level and years of experience ($p=0.03$).
- Significant association between Occupational stress level and shift pattern ($p=0.01$).
- No significant association with other demographics such as age, gender, or marital status observed.

DISCUSSION

The findings align with previous studies indicating moderate to high stress among staff nurses in Rajouri, in accordance with similar research conducted in the past ²⁻⁴. Rotational shifts and early-career nurses

reported higher stress, consistent with literature highlighting workload, role ambiguity, and lack of autonomy as key stressors ⁵⁻⁷. Addressing these through supportive supervision, adequate staffing, and stress management programs are essential ⁸⁻¹⁰.

CONCLUSION

Occupational stress among staff nurses in Rajouri is a pressing concern. Targeted interventions, including counselling, workload redistribution, and professional development, are recommended to enhance nurse well-being and patient care outcomes.

ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS

All formal permissions were obtained from authorities concerned. An Informed Consent was obtained from the study subjects and also, full confidentiality was ensured throughout the conduct of the study.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None

BUDGET

Self

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