

Occupational Stress and Job Satisfaction among Nurses Working in a Tertiary Care Hospital

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ABSTRACT

Background: Occupational stress and job dissatisfaction are prevalent issues among nurses employed in hospital settings. Occupational stress manifests as both emotional and physical reactions stemming from a perceived imbalance between an individual's priorities and responsibilities. Conversely, job satisfaction is a critical determinant of the efficiency and productivity of human resources. This study aims to assess level of occupational stress and level of job satisfaction among nurses working in tertiary care hospitals and to find out correlation between occupational stress and job satisfaction among nurses.

Method: Descriptive study design was used; study sample was 226 nurses selected by enumerative sampling technique. The data was collected using self-administered questionnaire consisted of socio-demographic information, Modified Expanded Nursing Stress Scale and Job Satisfaction Scale. The collected data was entered into SPSS version 26 and were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Result: More than half (58.45%) of the respondents reported a moderate level of stress. Similarly, more than half (52.7%) of the respondents expressed satisfaction with their job. The study identified significant associations between age, marital status, and number of children with the level of occupational stress among the respondents. However, no significant correlation was found between occupational stress and job satisfaction.

Conclusion: Based on the findings, it can be concluded that a majority of the respondents are experiencing stress, while more than half of the nurses are satisfied with their job. The most satisfying factors identified include the nature of the work itself and the hospital environment in which they work.

Key words: occupation stress; job satisfaction; nurses; hospital.

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INTRODUCTION

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) defines occupational stress as “the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker”.¹ Stress is an inevitable aspect of life, impacting us both positively and negatively. On the positive side, stress can serve as a driving force that motivates progress and fosters newfound awareness and perspectives. Conversely, it can also manifest negatively, inducing feelings of distress, rejection, and depression, thereby contributing to a range of physical and psychological issues.² Nursing is widely acknowledged as one of the most demanding and stressful professions. Within healthcare organizations, this work-related stress can lead to increased rates of absenteeism and turnover, ultimately compromising the quality of care provided.³ Nursing is widely recognized as an

occupation with high levels of stress. Occupational stress not only affects nurses' health but also their ability to cope with the demands of their job.⁴ Job satisfaction is an important component of improving job performance and maintaining the overall quality of work in any organization. Job satisfaction has been defined as the fulfillment of an employee's expectations for the work he or she performs.⁵ Job satisfaction refers to the feeling of job stability, career growth and a comfortable work life balance which implies that the employee is having satisfaction at job and the individual's expectations are met. Job satisfaction is one of the most important factors that determine efficiency and productivity of human resources.⁶ The prevalence of occupational stress among nurses was 87.4%.⁷ A study conducted in Maharashtra India occupational stress amongst nurses was 51.5% experienced mild, 34% experienced moderate, and 2.10% experienced severe stress.⁸ A study conducted among nurses

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working in the National Guard Primary Health Care Centers (PHCs) in the Makkah region, Saudi Arabia, revealed that (58%) of the nurses expressed satisfaction with their job.⁹ Research conducted in Nepal indicated that nearly half (46.9%) of the nurses expressed satisfaction with their job.⁶ Nurses play a crucial role in the healthcare delivery system. Job dissatisfaction is the most common reason for nurses to leave their jobs, resulting in high turnover rates and a shortage of nurses. However, there is limited research evidence regarding occupational stress and job satisfaction among nurses, especially in the study area.

METHODS

A cross-sectional descriptive study design was employed to assess occupational stress and job satisfaction among nurses, as well as to determine the correlation between these factors at a tertiary care hospital. Study was carried out at Bharatpur Hospital, Chitwan, Nepal. It is the only central Government hospital with 350 nursing staffs working in total wards. Study population consisted of all nursing staffs except ANMs. Enumerative sampling was utilized, and 226 nurses were included in the study. Nursing staffs that were present at the time of data collection and those willing to participate were included in the study. Data were collected through self-administered questionnaire; which consisted of three sections. The first section consisted of nurses' socio-demographic profile. The second section consisted of Expanded Nurses Stress Scale (ENSS) developed by French et. al.¹⁰ and third section Job Satisfaction Scale(JSS).¹¹ Administrative permission and ethical approval were obtained from the Institutional Review Committee of Bharatpur Hospital, Chitwan. Written informed consent was obtained from each respondent, ensuring their dignity by providing the right to reject or discontinue participation in the research study at any time. Confidentiality of the information was strictly maintained, with a commitment not to disclose the data and to use it solely for research purposes. Collected data were analyzed using SPSS version 26, employing both descriptive and inferential statistics.

Variables	Frequency (%)
Age Group in years	
20-39	214(94.7)
40-49	8(3.5)
More 50	4(1.8)
Ethnicity	
Brahmin/Chhetri	144(63.6)
Janjati	64(28.3)
Dalit	11(4.9)
Others	7(3.1)
Religion	
Hindu	198(87.6)
Buddhist	21(9.3)
Christian	7(3.1)
Marital Status	
Married	137(60.4)
Single	89(39.6)
Type of family	
Nuclear	144(63.7)
Joint	82(36.3)
Number of children	
Yes	97(42.9)
No	129(57.1)
Level of education	
PCL	141(62.38)
Bachelor	83(36.72)
Master	2(0.9)
Working unit	
Medical/medical ICU	32(14.2)
Surgical/ postop/SICU	49(21.7)
Orthopedic ward	12(5.3)
Pediatric/NICU/PICU	50(22.1)
Maternity	33(14.6)
Observation/ emergency	13(5.8)
Operation theater	24(10.6)
Others	13(5.8)
Working experience	
0 to 1 year	57(25.2)
1 to 5 year	113(50.0)
5 to 10 year	45(19.9)
More than 10 year	11(4.9)
Working Designation	
5 th level	215(95.2)
6 th level	8(3.5)
7 th level	3(1.3)

RESULTS

Out of 226 respondents, the majority (94.7%) were aged between 20 to 39 years, with a mean age of 28.17

years and a standard deviation of 5.43. More than half (63.6%) identified as Brahmin/Chhetri ethnically. The majority (87.6%) of respondents identified as Hindu. In terms of marital status, more than half (60.4%) were married. Similarly, more than half (63.7%) belonged to nuclear families, and 57.1% reported having no children. A significant majority (62.38%) of respondents had completed PCL Nursing. In terms of work unit, (22.1%) of respondents were employed

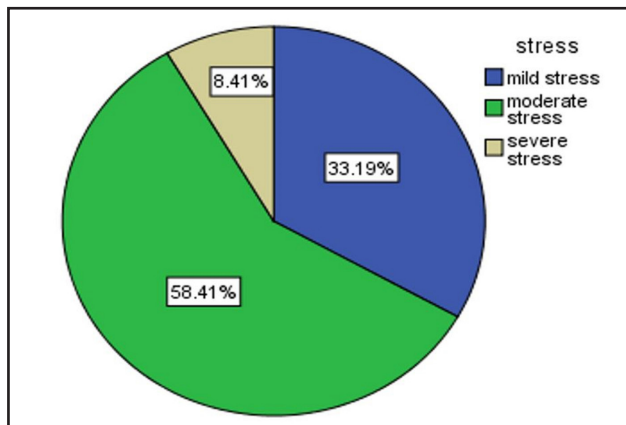


Figure 1. Level of occupational stress among respondents.

in pediatric units. Half (50.0%) of the respondents had between 1 to 5 years of work experience. The majority (95.2%) were recruited at the 5th level post. (Table 1).

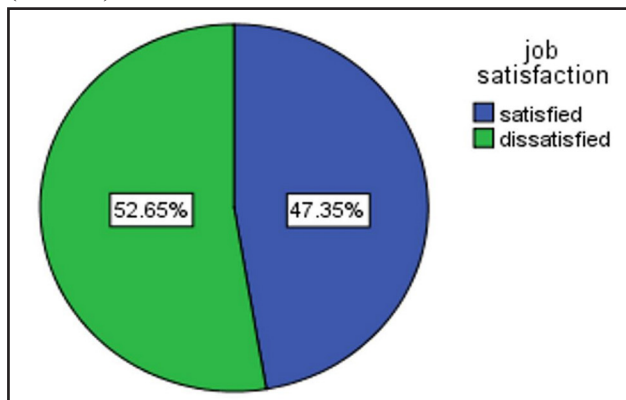


Figure 2. Level of job satisfaction among respondents.

Figure 1 shows that 58.4% of the respondents experienced a moderate level of stress, while one third (33%) reported mild stress, and 8.4% indicated severe stress.

Figure 2 reveals that 52.7% of the respondents were satisfied with their job, while 47.3% expressed dissatisfaction with their job.

Table 2 indicates the association between selected demographic variables and the level of occupational stress. Age showed a significant association with occupational stress at a 95% significance level (p-value = 0.010). However, there was no significant association found between ethnicity and occupational stress (p-value = 0.336), nor between type of family and occupational stress at the 95%

Table 2. Association between selected-demographic variables and occupational stress.

Variables	Level of occupational stress			X ² value	p-value
	Mild stress	Moderate stress	Severe stress		
Age (in completed year)					
Less than 30	17	50	2	8	0.01
More than 30	58	82	17		
Ethnicity					
Brahamin/cheetri	52	82	10	2.17	0.336
Others (Janajati, Dalit & Madheshi)	23	50	9		
Type of family					
Nuclear	55	76	13	5.33	0.069
Joint	20	56	6		
Marital status					
Married	39	80	18	11.59	0.003
Unmarried	36	52	1		
No of children					
Yes	31	52	14	8.087	0.018
No	44	80	5		

Note: * Chi square test: Significant ($P < 0.05$ at 95% confidence level)

significance level (p-value = 0.069). Marital status was significantly associated with occupational stress at a 95% significance level (p-value = 0.003), as was the number of children (p-value = 0.018).

Table 3 presents the association between selected demographic variables and the level of job satisfaction. The results indicate that there was no significant association found between age and level of job satisfaction at the 95% significance level (p-value = 0.924). Similarly, ethnicity did not show a significant association with job satisfaction (p-value = 0.107), nor did type of family (p-value = 0.289), marital status (p-value = 0.814), or number of children (p-value = 0.501) at the 95% significance level.

Table 4 indicates that there is no statistically significant correlation (p=0.308) between occupational stress and job satisfaction among nurses.

Table 3. Association between selected-demographic variables and job satisfaction.				
Variables	Level of Job Satisfaction			
	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	X ² value	p-value
Age (in completed year)				
Less than 30	36	33	0.009	0.924
More than 30	83	74		
Ethnicity				
Brahamin / Cheetri	70	74	2.6	0.107
Others (Janajati, Dalit & Madheshi)	40	33		
Type of family				
Nuclear	72	72	1.122	0.289
Joint	47	35		
Marital status				
Married	73	64	0.55	0.814
Unmarried	46	43		
No of children				
Yes	54	43	0.62	0.501
No	65	64		
Working experience				
Less than 5 years	70	74	2.6	0.17
More than 5 years	49	33		

Note: * Chi square test: Significant ($P < 0.05$ at 95% confidence level)

Table 4. Correlation coefficient between occupational stress and job satisfaction.		
Variables	Occupational stress	Job satisfaction
Occupational stress	1	-0.068 (p .308)
Job satisfaction		1

p value < 0.05

DISCUSSION

In the present study, a majority of nurses reported experiencing a moderate level of stress in their workplace. Key causes of stress identified included uncertainty about treatment, interactions with patients and families, workload, supervision, handling death and dying situations, and conflicts with physicians, which were frequent stressors among nurses. A cross-sectional study conducted among nurses at a public hospital in Ethiopia reported that 47.8% of nurses experienced occupational stress, a figure similar to the current study.¹² However, Bhatia and K found a higher prevalence of occupational stress among nurses at 87.4%, which is significantly higher than observed in the present study.⁷ Similarly, a study in Maharashtra, India, found that 51.5% of nurses experienced

mild stress, 34% experienced moderate stress, and 2.10% experienced severe stress.⁸ These findings were consistent with another study where 51.5% of nurses reported mild stress, 34% reported moderate stress, and 2.10% reported severe stress.² In a study conducted in Pokhara, 68.1% of respondents reported moderate stress levels and 4.4% reported severe stress levels in a government hospital.³ Comparatively, the prevalence of job stress found in this study is significantly higher than in a study from Sri Lanka, where only 21% of nurses were found to be under job stress.¹³ The present study indicates that 52.7% of the respondents were satisfied with their job, while 47.3% expressed dissatisfaction. A study conducted in Saudi Arabia reported similar results, with 58% of nurses satisfied and 42% dissatisfied with their job, aligning closely with the findings of the present study.⁹ In contrast, a study from Pune, India, found that 47% of nurses were dissatisfied with their job, 45% were neutral, and only 8% were satisfied.¹⁴ Another study showed that 53.1% of respondents were dissatisfied and 46.9% were satisfied, contrasting with the present study's findings.⁶ Furthermore, a study involving nursing faculties reported that 79% of participants were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, while 21% were dissatisfied with their job, which stands in opposition to the findings of the present study.¹⁵ The present study demonstrates a significant association between age, marital status, and the number of children with the level of occupational stress among nurses. However, in contrast, a different study reported that there was no significant association found between age and the level of occupational stress.³ Whereas study conducted at Serbia concluded that demographic determinants of the participants (age, marital status, educational level) significantly affected perception of stress at work place.¹⁶ The present study indicates that no statistically significant correlation ($r = -0.068$) was found between occupational stress and job satisfaction. A similar study conducted in India also found no significant correlation between occupational stress and job satisfaction ($r = 0.006$), which supports the findings of the present study.¹⁷ In contrast, a study conducted in Saudi Arabia reported

a negative significant relationship between perceived job-related stress and job satisfaction among nurses ($r = -0.437$) (18). This finding suggests that higher levels of perceived job-related stress were associated with lower levels of job satisfaction among nurses in Saudi Arabia, in contrast to the results of the present study and the study conducted in India. The study was conducted only a single setting of Bharatpur hospital, Chitwan so the finding of the study could not be generalized in other setting.

CONCLUSIONS

Nurses working at tertiary care hospitals reported an average level of occupational stress. More than half

of the nurses expressed satisfaction with their job, nursing practice, and found their work enjoyable and pleasant. The study recommends conducting basic trainings and in-service educational programs to update knowledge, thereby strengthening and ensuring the quality and continuity of nursing services.

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