

Original Research Article

Evaluate Nurse's Knowledge among Psychological Stress in Pediatric Department and Nursery Intensive Care Unit at Almak Nimr University Hospital

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Abstract: Background: Psychological stress is the body's natural response to physical or emotional pressure, leading to the release of hormones like cortisol and adrenaline. While stress can sometimes be beneficial by enhancing focus and decision-making, prolonged stress can negatively impact mental and physical health. To reduce its effects, practicing exercise, relaxation techniques, and effective time management is recommended. **Objective:** To Evaluate nurse's knowledge Among Psychological stress in pediatric department and Nursery intensive care unit **Methods:** This descriptive cross sectional hospital-based study design to assess stress among nurses in the pediatric department and NICU at Almak Nimr Hospital in period extended from "December to February 2025" purposive sampling technique was used, with a sample size of 38 nurses. Data were collected using a closed-ended questionnaire designed by the researchers. The questionnaire consisted of 18 questions finally the data was analyzed by statistical package for social solution (SPSS) version 18 then the data represents in form tables and figures. **Results:** The results of present study clarified that less than half (48%) of the study group experienced stress due to workload, (16%) due to a lack of medical resources, (10%) due to dealing with critical cases, and conflicts with colleagues and patients, (16%) indicated that all the mentioned factors contributed to their work-related stress. Also about Impact of anxiety or stress affect the quality of professional performance more than half (52%) of study group had moderate impact, (16%) of study group had significant impact, (32%) of study group had minor impact. And about dealing with psychological stress the result showed that the majority (84%) of study group had poor knowledge, only (2%) of study group had good knowledge, and (14%) of study group had fair knowledge. **Conclusion:** The result concluded that the nurses knowledge regarding physical health effect of stress is (82%) had poor knowledge, (16%) had fair knowledge and (2%) had good knowledge. **Recommendations:** Finally the study recommended that For Hospital Administration Establish a psychological support unit to help nurses cope with work-related stress, For Supervisors and Nursing Managers Promote a culture of appreciation by providing financial or moral incentives, such as appreciation letters and reward program, For Nurses Increase awareness of psychological stress through attending workshops and training course.

Keywords: Knowledge, Nurse, psychological stress, Pediatric department.

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INTRODUCTION

The detrimental physical and emotional reactions that arise when a worker's abilities, resources, or necessities do not match the demands of their job are known as job stress. Stress is "the physiological and emotional responses that occur when a worker perceives an imbalance between the effort exerted and the rewards he or she desires," according to the World Health Organization. In the modern world, stress has emerged as a health issue that affects workers' capacity to manage. One of the most demanding occupations is nursing. In 1960, Menzies conducted the first assessment of work stress in nursing, identifying four main sources among nurses: responsibility, change, patient care, and care giving. Work and other pressures that have arisen since nurses started their careers are primarily to blame for nursing stress. appeared when nurses started performing [1] occupations that demand a lot of mental and physical work since nurses operate in healthcare settings with everyday obstacles and mounting demands that can have a serious negative impact on their mental health.

Burnout is one of the most common issues that can impact healthcare professionals, particularly nurses, among these difficulties. Burnout results from extreme exhaustion brought on by ongoing, debilitating demands, which impairs work performance and lowers the standard of patient care [2].

The variety and character of the work affect the psychological stress levels. According to this theory, the most prevalent professions are those that include face-to-face interactions with people and involve people who are committed to helping others. Because they are professionals with a strong desire to serve others, nurses, doctors, teachers, managers, and social workers are more likely to put in more effort than others. We discover that hospital nurses and working nurses are subjected to varying levels of Social pressure and psychology are connected. Working in an environment where they believe their efforts are not Given that it is valued and rewarded, the nursing profession is regarded as one of those that demands a lot of labor from its employees due to its high levels of stress. Due to pressure, some nurses are dissatisfied and lack confidence in their line of work. It has a detrimental impact on their effectiveness as well as their compatibility both professionally and psychologically [3]. Stress affects a person's physical, emotional, or mental health when there is an imbalance between the demands made of them and their capacity to handle or react to those expectations[5].

According to some self-report measures linked to those disorders, psychological stress is described as "a group of painful mental and physical symptoms associated with some states of normal mood swings in most people." It can also be interpreted as the onset of major depressive disorder, anxiety disorder, schizophrenia, maturation disorder, or a variety of other clinical conditions [6].

Risk factors for psychological stress among pediatric patients vary and include Personal factors (Personal anxiety and stress, Poor social support, Limited professional experience). Professional factors(Excessive workload, Dealing with critically ill patients or children with chronic diseases. Lack of support from colleagues or management, Exposure to difficult emotional situations, such as the death or severe suffering of children. Environmental factors (Uncomfortable or disorganized work environment. Lack of resources or equipment). And Psycho social factors (Poor communication between the medical team and families, Pressure resulting from grand expectations from the family or society) [8]. Causes of psychological distress to nurses : Occupational infections .The most common occupational infections of concern in the health sector are tuberculosis, hepatitis B and C, HIV/AIDS, and respiratory infections (corona viruses and influenza).Carrying unsafe patients can lift, transport, reposition and move patients without proper handling techniques or handling equipment (e.g., back injuries and chronic back pain).The most common hazardous chemicals in the health sector include detergents, disinfectants, sterilant, mercury, toxic drugs, pesticides, latex, and laboratory chemicals and reagents, Exposure to ionizing radiation (X-rays and radio nuclides) and non-ionizing radiation (ultraviolet radiation and lasers) can occur in health care settings and can pose a specific risk to the health and safety of health workers.

Mental health and psychological hazards Important risk factors for occupational stress, burnout, and weariness among health workers include time constraints, lack of control over job duties, lengthy workdays, working shifts, emotional harm, and a lack of support. Harassment and violence This covers instances of physical, sexual, verbal, and psychological abuse as well as workplace harassment that occur among health workers and are connected to their jobs. Workplace accidents Slips, stumbles, and falls, road traffic injuries (bike, motorbike, and ambulance accidents), electrical shocks, explosions, and flames are among the common injuries sustained by health workers. Safety of the Environment: Health workers may sustain work-related illnesses and injuries due to unsafe and insufficient drinking and washing water, poor sanitation and hygiene, hazardous medical waste, and climate-related dangers [8]. Signs and symptoms of stress include (Physical Symptoms [9] Sleep problems such as insomnia [10],Behavioral Symptoms [11]Emotional and Psychological Symptoms [12] Cognitive Symptoms [11] Factors leading to stress(The disease itself ,The environment inside the hospital , Isolation from the family ,Medical interventions ,Physical medications ,Family anxiety ,Communication with medical staff , Psychological and emotional factors ,Social influence, Age and developmental factor and Impact of social status.[13].

Impact of stress on one's ability to function professionally. Numerous research have revealed that occupational stress has a major impact on pediatric department nurses' performance since it leads to both physical and mental tiredness, which in turn impairs job performance. According to one study, the psychological strain and workload associated with caring for critically sick pediatric patients can generate stress, which can impair one's capacity to make prompt and accurate decisions—a essential skill in this line of work [14].

impact of psychology on mental health. Nurses who experience ongoing stress have higher levels of anxiety and despair, which impairs their concentration and capacity to give children the care they need. Nurses may find it difficult to manage emergency circumstances in pediatric departments where prompt decision-making is necessary, which raises the risk of medical errors.

influence on coping mechanisms. According to studies, nurses who lack healthy coping mechanisms for stress are more likely to experience psychological weariness, which impairs their capacity to handle challenging situations involving children. A decrease in job performance is particularly severe for those who employ unhealthy coping strategies, such as social disengagement or elevated psychological stress [15].

Impact on the Standard of Care Given to Children: Stress has a direct impact on the standard of care given to children. Psychological stress can cause nurses to lose focus on the important details of care that sick children need, which raises the possibility of medical errors that could harm the kids' health [16].

Strategies to reduce stress:

Institutional intervention to reduce stress among nurses working in pediatric wards [17]. Psychological support [18]. Support work environments Leadership Support: [19] Positive coping mechanisms [20]. Professional training [21]. Flexibility in work schedule [22]. Social and professional support [23]. Mindfulness based interventions[24]. Relaxation programs [25].

METHODOLOGY

Study design: These descriptive cross sectional hospital-based study done to assess stress among nurses in pediatric departments and NICU in Almak Nimer Hospital University in period extended from December to February.

Study area: Shendi City: is an ancient Sudanese city located in the Nile State, about 150 km north of Khartoum. The city is also a center for education and healthcare, hosting Shendi University and major

hospitals such as Shendi Teaching Hospital and Al-Mak Nimer University Hospital and Military Medical Hospital.

Study setting: Al Mak Nimer University Hospital, located in Shendi, was opened in 2001 under the umbrella of Shendi University, to be the nucleus of training medical science students and the provision of medical services to local citizens in Shendi. The hospital includes a variety of medical departments one of them pediatric department at Al Mak Nimer Hospital it is he important departments that provide medical care for children from newborns to teenagers. The pediatric department include: Children word: It consists of 4 words General word, Neonate, Gastrointestinal tract word, Respiratory word. It works with 21 nurses. Nicu established in 2006.It consists of septic and Aseptic. Consisting of 4 Incubator 12 BEDES 5 phototherapies 3 Warmer 2 Weight Scale It works with 28 nurses.

Study Population: All nurses working in the pediatric department and NICU of Al-Mak Nimer Hospital.

Inclusion criteria: All nurses working in the pediatric department and NICU.

Exclusion criteria: Nurse who are not willing to participate in the study and Nurses who are not available at the time of the study.

Sampling: Non-random (Purposive Sampling include 38 nurses in the Pediatrics Department at Mak Nimer Hospital:

Data collection tools: The data was collected by a closed ended questionnaire designed by researcher based on reviewing of literature, The questionnaire consists of 18 questions 2 sections that include the various aspects of the psychological pressures facing nurses in the pediatric department.

Data analysis: After the data collected it coded and transferred into specially designed forms so as to be suitable for computer finding using soft program the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS version 18).

Ethical Consideration: The permission has been approved by ethical committee of research in the faculty of nursing science, then the permission was taken from the head nurse. The purpose of the study was explained verbally and clearly in Arabic language to the nurses The names and address of the participants was not recorded in the questionnaire, the overall data were collected after full informed and then verbal consent has been taken from each one and they told they have right to withdrawal from this study when she/he need.

RESULTS

4.1 Part (One): Socio-demographic data:

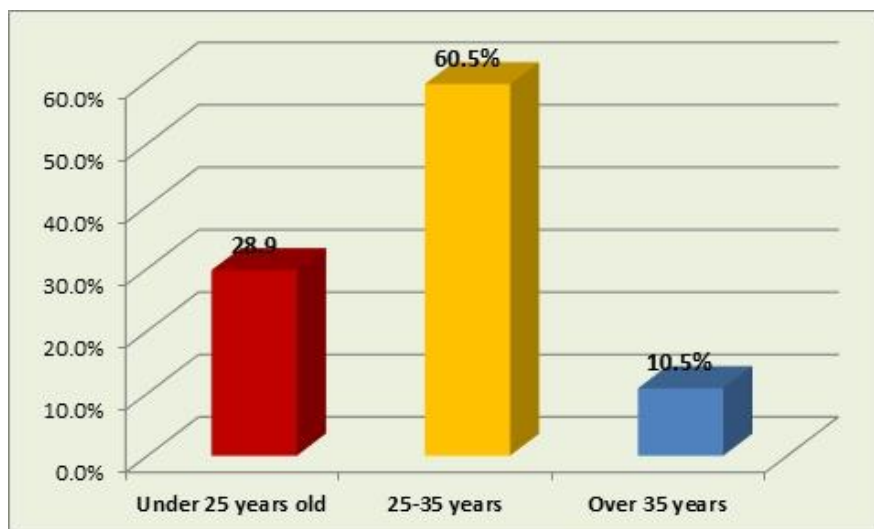


Figure No 1: Distribution of study Group According to Age

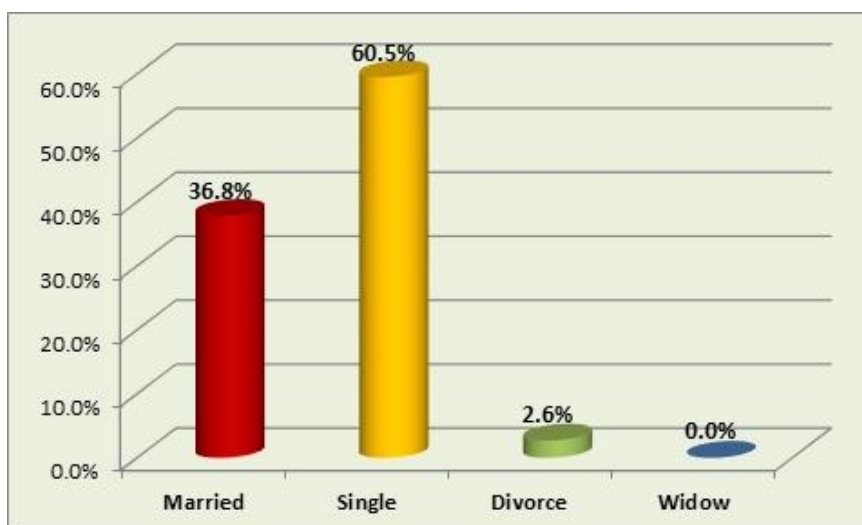


Figure No 2: Distribution of study Group According to Social stuats

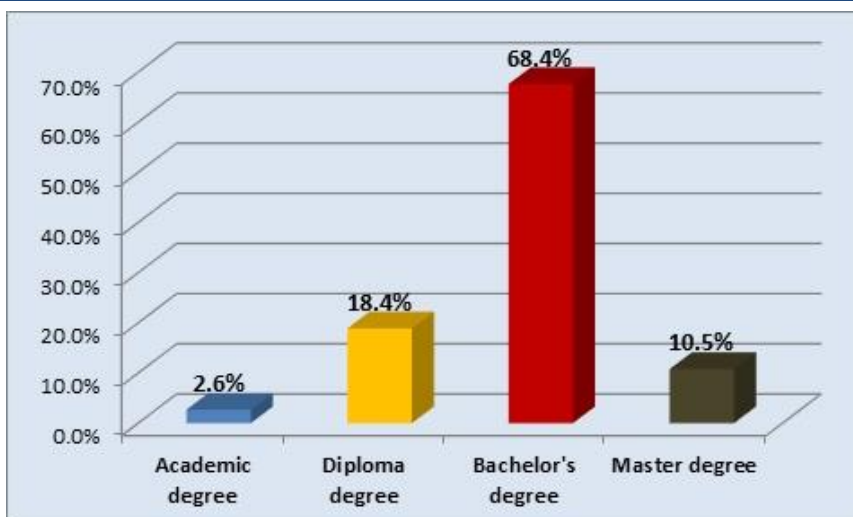


Figure No 3: Distribution of study Group According to Educational level

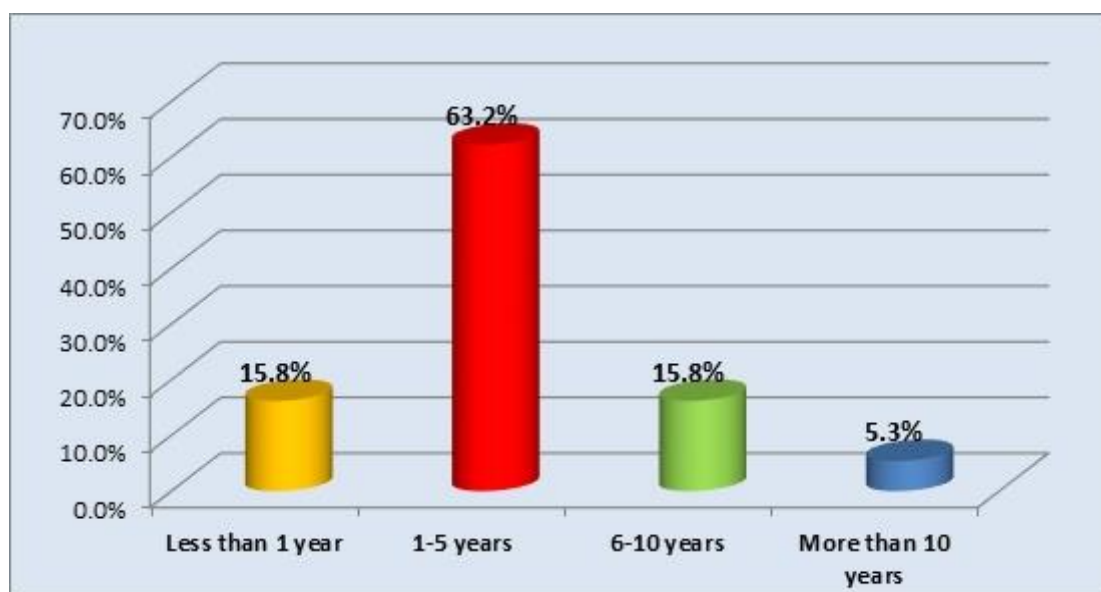


Figure No 4: Distribution of study Group According to Years of nursing experience

Table No 1: Distribution of study Group According to Daily working hours

Item	Frequency	Percent
24 hours	10	26%
12 hours	8	22%
6-8 hours	16	42%
Less than 6 hours	2	5%
24 hours + 12 hours	2	5%
Total	38	100.0%

Above table showed that (26%) of study group their work 24 hours.

Table No 2: Distribution of study Group According to Main reasons causing stress at work

Item	Frequency	Percent
Workload	18	48%
Lack of medical resources	6	16%
Dealing with critical cases	4	10%
Conflicts with colleagues or patients	4	10%
All reasons	6	16%
Total	38	100%

Above table clarified that (16%) of study group had Lack of medical resources about reason causing stress.

Table No 3: Distribution of study Group According to Ability to balance work and personal life

Item	Frequency	Percent
Able to balance	17	45%
Sometimes	17	45%
Difficult to balance	4	10%
Total	38	100.0%

The above table explained that (10%) of study group had difficult to balance work and personal life.

Table No 4: Distribution of study Group According to Level of psychological pressure you experience

Item	Frequency	Percent
Low	7	18%
Average	17	45%
High	14	37%
Total	38	100.0%

The above table revealed that (45%) of study group had average level of psychological pressure they experience.

Table No 5: Distribution of study Group According to Impact of stress on focus at work

Item	Frequency	Percent
Significant impact	10	26%
Moderate impact	25	66%
Minor impact	3	8%
Total	38	100.0%

The above table showed that (66%) of study group had moderate impact of stress on focus at work.

Table No 6: Distribution of study Group According to Impact of psychological stress from dealing with critical pediatric cases on professional performance

Item	Frequency	Percent
Significant impact	9	24%
Moderate impact	27	71%
Minor impact	2	5%
Total	38	100.0%

The above table clarified that (71%) had moderate impact of psychological stress.

Table No 7: Distribution of study Group According to Impact of anxiety or stress affect the quality of professional performance

Item	Frequency	Percent
Significant impact	6	16%
Moderate impact	20	52%
Minor impact	12	32%
Total	38	100.0%

The above table explained that (16%) of study group had significant impact of anxiety affect the quality of professional performance.

Table No 8: Distribution of study Group According to Work related psychological stress

Item	Frequency	Percent
Good knowledge	1	2%
Fair knowledge	9	24%
Poor knowledge	28	74%
Total	38	100.0%

The above table revealed that (24%) of study group had fair knowledge about work related psychological stress.

Table No 9: Distribution of study Group According to Physical health effect

Item	Frequency	Percent
Good knowledge	1	2%
Fair knowledge	6	16%
Poor knowledge	31	82%
Total	38	100.0%

The above table showed that (16%) of study group had fair knowledge about physical health effect.

Table No 10: Distribution of study Group According to Social and emotional effect

Item	Frequency	Percent
Good knowledge	4	10%
Fair knowledge	4	10%
Poor knowledge	30	80%
Total	38	100.0%

The above table clarified that (80%) of study group had poor knowledge about social and emotional effect.

Table No 11: Distribution of study Group According to Deal with psychological stress

Item	Frequency	Percent
Good knowledge	1	2%
Fair knowledge	5	14%
Poor knowledge	32	84%
Total	38	100.0%

The above table explained that (84%) of study group had poor knowledge about deal with psychological stress.

Table No 12: Distribution of study Group According to Psychological or medical help to deal with stress

Item	Frequency	Percent
Good knowledge	1	3%
Fair knowledge	3	8%
Poor knowledge	34	89%
Total	38	100.0%

The above table Described that (8%) of study group had fair knowledge about psychological or medical help to deal with stress.

Table No 13: Distribution of study Group According to Management to reduce stress

Item	Frequency	Percent
Good knowledge	5	14%
Fair knowledge	10	26%
Poor knowledge	23	60%
Total	38	100.0%

The above table revealed that (60%) of study group had poor knowledge about Management to reduce stress.

DISCUSSION

Nurses in pediatric and nursery ICU units face significant psychological stress due to handling critical cases and long working hours. The emotional toll of dealing with patients' suffering and loss adds to the pressure. Providing psychological support is essential to help them cope and improve care quality. The present study showed that more than two third (68%) of study group their level of education were Bachelor's degree and (63%) of study group their years of experience between 1-5 years.

Our current study showed that less than one third (26%) of study group work for 24 consecutive hours, which may increase psychological and physical stress and affect productivity and work-life balance, also less than half (48%) of them experience stress due to workload, making it the primary cause of job-related stress. Increased workload leads to physical and mental exhaustion, reduced focus, and a higher rate of professional errors, which can negatively impact job performance, and (10%) of the study group had difficulty balancing work and personal life, which may lead to

increased stress, mental and physical exhaustion, and reduced quality of life.

The study showed that less than half (45%) of nurses experience moderate to psychological pressure, this agrees with previous study done by Bolado, G.N in Southern Ethiopia, which states that (56%) of nurses experienced moderate stress. The slight difference between the percentages might be due to variations in the conditions or environment in which the studies were conducted. However, in both cases, it indicates that moderate psychological pressure is the most common among nurses [26].

On other hand our study showed that (26%) of the study group reporting a significant impact of stress on their focus at work indicates that a notable portion of nurses experience high levels of stress, also regarding to impact of study group about impact of psychological stress from dealing with critical pediatrics cases on professional performance our study group had moderate impact (71%) this result, does not agree with previous study done by Abu Al Hussein (2010) in Gaza Strip, Palestine (the Islamic University of Gaza, Faculty of Education).which showed that (65%) of study group had

significant impact of stress on professional performance [27].

The present study showed that only (16%) of the study group reported a significant impact of anxiety or stress on the quality of their professional performance. Additionally (24%) of the study group had fair knowledge indicates that some nurses are aware of the psychological stress at work, regarding knowledge about the impact of stress on physical health, our study showed that majority (82%) of the study group had poor knowledge about the effects of psychological stress on physical health, while previous study done by Cheng ,H.Liu, G. in public hospital in mainland china, showed daytime sleepiness was (59%) while fatigue and anxiety were (43%) [28].

Regarding to knowledge of study group about emotional and social effect of stress our study clarified that only (10%) of them had good knowledge, while previous study done by Nikoletta Páll A.S Hungary, Europe (2021) found better results than our study (73%) had good knowledge about emotional and social effect of stress [29]. Regarding dealing with psychological stress, our study showed that (14%) of the study group had fair knowledge about coping with psychological stress.

A previous study indicated that (43%) of the study group seek psychological support from their family members [30].

The present study showed that majority (89%) of the study group had poor knowledge about how to access psychological or medical help to deal with psychological stress, and showed that (14%) of them had good knowledge about stress management to reduce it. This percentage is low, indicating that only a small portion of the nurses in the study have sufficient understanding of effective stress management strategies and techniques.

Recommendations

Based on the study findings and conclusions; the recommendations can be categorized as follows:

First: For Hospital Administration

1. Establish a psychological support unit to help nurses cope with work-related stress.
2. Implement clear policies to reduce stress, such as minimizing overtime hours and improving the leave system.

Second: For Supervisors and Nursing Managers

1. Promote a culture of appreciation by providing financial or moral incentives, such as appreciation letters and reward programs.
2. Create a supportive work environment by improving the physical and psychological conditions of nurses.

Third: For Nurses

1. Increase awareness of psychological stress through attending workshops and training courses.
2. Adopt coping strategies such as relaxation techniques, deep breathing, and physical exercise.

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