

ASSESSMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH OF STAFF NURSES WORKING IN TERTIARY CARE HOSPITAL AND ITS IMPACTS ON ROUTINE LIFE

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Abstract

Introduction: Mental health is essential for overall well-being, influencing decision-making, interpersonal relationships, and stress management. Nurses, as frontline healthcare providers, are increasingly vulnerable to mental health concerns due to high workload and job-related stress.

Objectives: This study aimed to assess the mental health status of nurses and evaluate its impact on their routine life in a tertiary care hospital.

Material and Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted at Mayo Hospital Lahore, including 137 nurses aged 25–45 years. Data were collected using a standardized questionnaire based on a Likert scale. Demographic variables included age, gender, education, working shift, and professional experience. Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation) were applied for analysis.

Results: Most participants were aged 31–35 years and single, with 40.9% holding a diploma in general nursing and 33.4% registered nurses. The mean mental health score was 24, indicating moderate challenges that affected daily duties but were not severe.

Conclusion: Findings highlight the need for stress management programs, supportive policies, and counseling services to promote nurses' mental well-being.

INTRODUCTION

Mental health is essential for overall well-being, influencing decision-making, interpersonal interactions, and stress management in both personal and professional spheres. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2020) defines mental health as the capacity to realize one's potential, cope with stress, work productively, and contribute to the community. Nurses, as the backbone of healthcare systems, play a critical role in direct patient care, monitoring, and emotional support, but these responsibilities often expose them to high stress and mental health challenges (Smiley et al., 2021; Kiran,

2022). Studies consistently show that nurses are more vulnerable to mental health issues than the general population, with occupational stress arising when job demands exceed available resources or coping capacity (Howard & Director, 2022; Podvorica et al., 2020).

Burnout and compassion fatigue are among the most common problems affecting nurses, resulting in emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. High workloads, long shifts, inadequate staffing, and constant exposure to suffering and death have been identified

as major contributors (Duffy, 2022; Rosen et al., 2022). Nurses working in high-intensity areas such as ICUs and emergency departments are at greater risk. Burnout not only undermines nurses' well-being but also compromises patient safety, leading to errors and diminished quality of care. Additionally, compassion fatigue from providing emotional support to patients and families often results in feelings of powerlessness, alienation, and decreased job satisfaction (Zakeri et al., 2022).

The effects of poor mental health extend beyond the workplace into nurses' personal lives, contributing to strained relationships, social withdrawal, and poor physical health outcomes such as fatigue and weakened immunity (Zhang et al., 2020; Wong et al., 2020). Tertiary care settings, with their complex and demanding environments, further intensify these challenges, requiring both skill and emotional resilience (Ventresca et al., 2024). Addressing nurses' mental health requires a multidimensional approach, including supportive workplace policies, safe staffing, resilience training, stress management programs, and peer support networks (Flaubert et al., 2021; Merlo & Fagundes, 2023; Clayton, 2021). Prioritizing these interventions is vital not only for protecting nurses' well-being but also for ensuring safe, compassionate, and effective patient care.

1. Materials and Methods

1.1 Study Design and Setting

This was a descriptive cross-sectional study conducted at Mayo Hospital Lahore. The study was carried out over three months following the approval of the synopsis. The study population included all nurses employed at Mayo Hospital, Lahore.

1.2 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The sample size was calculated using Slovin's formula at a 95% confidence level with a 5% margin of error (Anugraheni et al., 2023). Out of 210 nurses working in different departments, a sample size of 137 was sufficient. A systematic random sampling technique was applied to select participants.

2. Results

Table 1. Background Characteristics of Nurses (n = 137)

Variable	Category	N	%
Age (Years)	25-30	31	22.6

1.3 Eligibility Criteria

Inclusion criteria consisted of nurses aged 25-45 years, with at least two years of clinical experience, who were willing to participate. Exclusion criteria included head staff, nursing students, paramedical staff, unwilling participants, and those with less than two years of experience.

1.4 Variables

Demographic variables included age, gender, education, working shift, and professional experience. Study variables comprised all questions from the standardized questionnaire, which assessed mental health status and its impact on daily life.

1.5 Data Collection

Data were collected using a standardized questionnaire, with formal permission obtained from Dr. Enam Allagh Charkhat Gorgich to adapt the tool. The questionnaire included three sections: demographic information, mental health assessment, and impacts on routine life. A three-point Likert scale was used, categorizing scores as mild (0-15), moderate (16-25), and severe (26-30) mental health issues (Du et al., 2020). Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and confidentiality was maintained throughout the study. Completed questionnaires were entered into SPSS version 24 for analysis.

1.6 Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS version 24 (IBM). Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarize both qualitative and quantitative variables.

1.7 Ethical Considerations

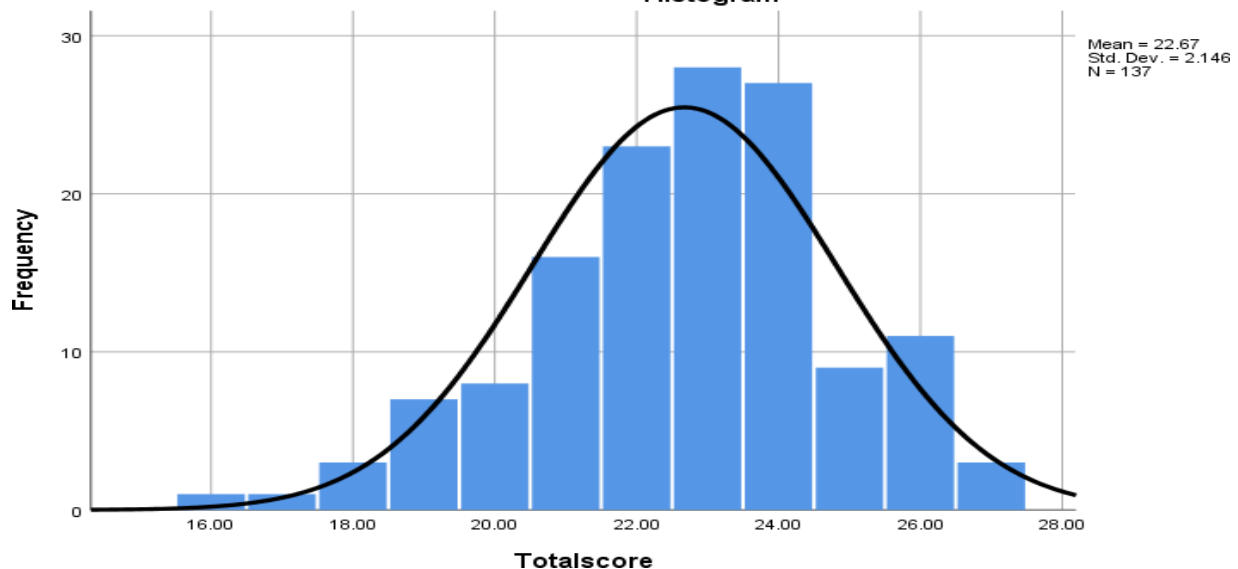
The study followed the ethical principles of the Helsinki Declaration (Petkov et al., 2022). Participant privacy and confidentiality were ensured, informed consent was obtained, and measures were taken to protect participants from potential risks.

	31-35	86	62.8
	35-50	20	14.6
Marital Status	Single	78	56.9
	Married	56	40.9
	Divorced	3	2.2
Qualification	General Nursing & Midwifery	56	40.9
	Post RN	43	31.4
	BSc. Nursing	18	13.1
	Specialization	17	12.4
	MSN	3	2.2
Experience (Years)	3-5	66	53.2
	6-10	49	39.5
	>10	9	7.3
Working Shift	Morning	106	77.4
	Evening	20	14.6
	Night	11	8.0
Type of Unit	Emergency	17	12.4
	ICU	33	24.1
	Ward	87	63.5

Table 1 provides the demographic and professional profile of 137 nurses at Mayo Hospital, Lahore. The majority were aged 31-35 years (62.8%) and more than half were single (56.9%). Regarding qualifications, most held General Nursing & Midwifery diplomas (40.9%) or Post RN certifications (31.4%), while very few (2.2%) had MSN degrees. In terms of professional experience,

over half (53.2%) had 3-5 years of service, and 39.5% had 6-10 years. Most nurses worked morning shifts (77.4%), while only 8.0% worked nights. The majority were assigned to wards (63.5%), followed by ICUs (24.1%) and emergency units (12.4%). Overall, the data reflect a young, moderately experienced nursing workforce concentrated in general ward services.

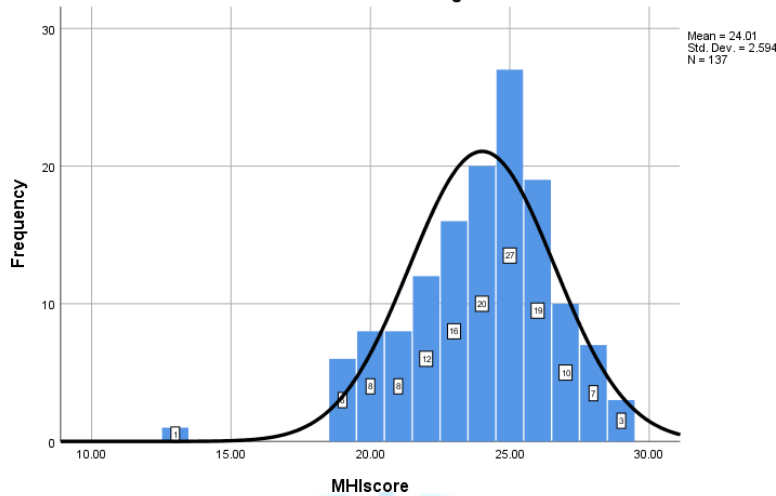
Figure 1. Mental Health Assessment Histogram



The analysis's findings on nurses' mental health showed a moderate level of mental health issues, with a total mean score of 23 across the 10 variables evaluated. This implies that psychological stress is a common occurrence for nurses, which might impact

their general well-being and performance at work. The distribution of mean scores was shown using a histogram, which offers a clear visual depiction of trends unique to a certain variable.

Figure 2 Impacts on Routine Life of Mental Health Assessment
Histogram



The analysis's mean score of 24 indicated a moderate effect level. This implies that mental health conditions have a moderate impact on nurses' everyday activities and regular duties in both their personal and professional lives.

The distribution of the participants' scores throughout the three impact categories— low, moderate, and high—is depicted in the histogram (Figure 2). The majority of respondents fell into the moderate category, indicating that, for the majority of the sample, the total burden of mental health issues is significant but not severe.

3. Discussion

This study revealed that most participants were young nurses aged 31–35 years, with more than half unmarried. Younger nurses are often in the early stages of their careers, where limited experience, emotional demands, and heavy workloads increase stress and affect mental health outcomes (Carlson et al., 2021). Marital status also influenced stress levels, as single nurses lacked family support, while married ones balanced work and family responsibilities (Alyousef & Alhamidi, 2023). Educational background showed variation, with most nurses holding diplomas or Post RN qualifications, while

few had higher degrees. Previous research indicates that higher education is associated with resilience and better coping mechanisms, helping nurses manage stress more effectively (Aiken et al., 2023). Professional experience further shaped outcomes; while moderately experienced nurses demonstrated coping skills, cumulative stress exposure increased their risk of burnout (Lubbadeh, 2020).

The findings indicated that nurses experienced a moderate level of mental health issues, with a mean score of 23–24 on the Likert scale, representing anxiety, depression, and emotional exhaustion. This aligns with global evidence highlighting high rates of mental health problems among healthcare workers due to long shifts, high patient loads, and emotional strain (Smith & Merwin, 2021; Sinsky et al., 2022). Nurses in high-intensity settings such as ICUs and emergency units were particularly vulnerable, consistent with the findings of Roberts et al. (2022). Symptoms like sleep disturbances, irritability, and weakened immunity, reported in earlier studies (Liu et al., 2020), were reflected in the psychological pressures faced by participants. Nonetheless, some nurses managed stress better through resilience and coping strategies, echoing the importance of

mindfulness and social support in mitigating negative effects (Kader et al., 2021).

The moderate impact of mental health issues underscores the demanding nature of nursing while suggesting the potential for interventions to reduce psychological strain. Recommendations include regular psychological evaluations, stress management workshops, counseling services, and creating open, supportive workplace cultures to reduce stigma (Katz, 2021). Organizational changes such as flexible scheduling, adequate staffing, and promoting work-life balance are also critical, as these factors are strongly associated with better mental health and job satisfaction (Ajanaku et al., 2022). Furthermore, targeted training programs to enhance emotional intelligence, coping strategies, and resilience may significantly lower the risk of burnout and sustain nurses' long-term well-being (Fox, 2021).

4. Conclusion

The study found that nurses at Mayo Hospital experienced moderate levels of mental health challenges, influenced by factors such as age, workload, marital status, and professional experience. To address these issues, it is recommended that hospitals implement structured support systems including stress management training, counseling services, adequate staffing, and workplace policies that promote resilience and work-life balance to safeguard both nurse well-being and patient care quality.

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