

Psychological well-being – male and female nurses

Thomas Jasmine T M^{1*}

ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to study the psychological wellbeing among male and female nurses. The hypothesis of the study was that there will be a significant influence of **autonomy** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses ,there will be a significant influence of **personal growth** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses ,there will be a significant influence of **environmental mastery** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses ,there will be a significant influence of **purpose in life** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses ,there will be a significant influence of **positive relationship with others** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses , there will be a significant influence of **self-acceptance** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses. The sample consists of 30 male nurses and 30 female nurses. The scale used for the study was Riff's Scales of Psychological Well-Being' for assessing the psychological well-being of nursing professionals. The data was analysed using SPSS version 16.0, descriptive analysis was carried out and Independent 't' test were used. The results of the study indicate that there is no significant influence in the factors of positive relationship with others, autonomy, personal growth purpose in life and self-acceptance of psychological well-being among male and female nurses. Whereas there will be a significant influence of environmental mastery factor of psychological well-being among male and female nurses.

Keywords: *Psychological well-being, male nurses and female nurses.*

At the elementary level, psychological wellbeing (PWB) is comparable to other terms that refer to positive mental conditions, such as happiness or satisfaction, and in many ways, it is not necessary, or helpful to worry about fine distinctions between such terms. If we say that I'm happy, or very satisfied with my life you can be sure that my psychological wellbeing is quite high. Psychological Wellbeing has two important facets. The first of these denotes to the extent to which people experience positive emotions and feelings of happiness. So, the two important elements in PWB are the subjective happy feelings brought on by something we enjoy and the feeling that what we are doing with our lives has some meaning and purpose.

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Theories about PWB usually focus on understanding the structure of psychological wellbeing. The breakdown of psychological wellbeing into hedonic and eudemonic components and Carol Riff's model are widely accepted theories of the structure of PWB. As far as the changing aspects of PWB are concerned it's important to understand that, PWB is fairly stable and influenced by both previous experience (including, for example, early upbringing) and underlying personality. Stressful experiences can influence people to subsequent mood and anxiety disorders (Gladstone, Parker and Mitchell, 2004) but, on the other hand exposure to tremendously traumatic events can help to build resilience and actually protect PWB. For example, children exposed to moderately stressful events seem better able to cope with subsequent stressors (Khobasa & Maddi, 1999).

In summary, PWB theory suggests that early experience and underlying personality create a platform for PWB, but everyday experiences can help to maintain a good level of PWB if they are positive and if they are negative, reduce levels of PWB, leading to poor health outcomes.

Psychological well-being denotes to positive mental health (Edwards, 2005). Research has shown, psychological well-being is a varied multidimensional concept (MacLeod & Moore, 2000; Riff, 1989b; Wissing & Van Eeden, 2002) and this develops through a mixture of emotional regulation, identity, personality characteristics and life experience (Helson & Srivastava, 2001). Psychological well-being can increase with age, education, extraversion and consciousness and decreases with neuroticism (Keyes et al., 2002).

In terms of gender, research has shown that there is no significant difference between men and women on psychological well-being measures (Roothman, Kirsten & Wissing, 2003). Also, the perception of physical health and spirituality can arbitrate the relationship between context and psychological wellbeing (Temane & Wissing, 2006a, 2006b).

Background/Premise of the study

Psychological well-being is a vital part for nurses. Due to psychological well-being of nursing staff, this will affect the patient care, patient-nurse relationship and health of other health workers. Research focuses on comparison on psychological well-being among male and female nurses. This study is important to understand whether above mentioned reasons as well as gender disparity affecting the psychological well-being of male nursing staffs when compared to female nurses.

Statement of the Research Problem

The comparative study on psychological well-being among male nursing staff and female nursing staff.

Significance & Scope of the Present Study

Just like any other profession, nursing too requires much schooling and training. However, men are often up against further barriers that don't end after the education, still they continue long all through their career. Instead of motivation, many men who chase nursing profession mention discouragement even from their family and peers for joining a nursing school. This makes it harder for them to live their dreams.

Furthermore, there are men who think as if they are used just because of muscle power by their female peers while some others faced the belief that men are not caring up to that level as women do. Besides, men are also considered inappropriate for certain nursing specialties,

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like Gynaecology. As a matter of fact, men as well as women have their own stories of difficulties, though, there are things commonly faced by men in nursing are worth considering just as women generally face problems in other occupations.

The significance behind conducting this research will help in understanding is there a difference in psychological well-being among male and female nursing professionals. It can also help in understanding how gender disparity and other job demands influence the psychological well-being. Results from the study can help in creating training programs, selection criteria, designing orientation programs differently for men and women. Also, this study can help in creating counselling models for the male and female nursing professionals.

Rationale for the study

Many studies have been carried out in nursing sector to understand their psychological well-being. As nursing profession becoming gender inclusive, it is important to understand whether gender affects the psychological well-being of nurses. This current study focuses on studying the psychological well-being among male and female nursing staff, which will help in understanding is there a difference in psychological well-being among male and female nursing professionals.

Research Gap

To being with there is a dearth in the Indian literature on the construct of psychological well-being among nursing professionals. Current studies on the existence of gender differences, including those related to psychological wellbeing reflect contradictory result and a distinct lack of consensus especially in Indian context. Gender differences in psychological wellbeing are important because of the many efforts being made in contemporary society to empower all individuals to achieve self-actualization and utilize their full potential. Hence this study was attempted to understand and gain clarity with respect to the chosen sample population contribute to the available literature.

METHODOLOGY

Aim

To study psychological well-being among male and female nurses.

Specific Objectives

1. To study the influence of **autonomy** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses
2. To study the influence of **personal growth** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses
3. To study the influence of **environmental mastery** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses
4. To study the influence of **purpose in life** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses
5. To study the influence of **positive relationship with others** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses
6. To study the influence of **self-acceptance** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses

Research hypotheses

1. There will be a significant influence of **autonomy** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses

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2. There will be a significant influence of **personal growth** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses
3. There will be a significant influence of **environmental mastery** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses
4. There will be a significant influence of **purpose in life** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses
5. There will be a significant influence of **positive relationship with others** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses
6. There will be a significant influence of **self-acceptance** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses

Research Design

The present study uses a quantitative study. It is cross-sectional Non-experimental study involving comparative research design. Through this research design the researcher can investigate the influence of independent variables on a dependent variable by comparing two or more group of individuals. In non-experimental research design the researcher does not have to manipulate any variable for extraneous factor in the correlation method the main interest of the researcher involved in observing the values of two or more variables and determining what relationship between two variables exists (Bordens and Abbot, 2011).

Variables

The variables selected for the study will be divided into two categories, independent and dependent variable.

1. Independent variable: Psychological well-being (autonomy, personal growth, environmental mastery, purpose in life, self-acceptance, positive relationship with others)
2. Dependent variable: Male and female nurses

Operational Definition

Psychological well-being: Positive relationship with others, autonomy, feeling of purpose and satisfaction with life.

Nursing professional: According to World Health Organisation (WHO), Nursing encompasses autonomous and collaborative care of individuals of all ages, families, groups and communities, sick or well and in all settings. It includes the promotion of health, the prevention of illness, and the care of ill, disabled and dying people.

Male Nurse: Definition of a male nurse is, a man who is employed to tend sick, injured, or infirm people

Female Nurse: Definition of a female nurse is, a woman who is employed to tend sick, injured, or infirm people.

Sample

Sample Description: The Population from which the sample for the present study chosen are male and female Nurses. The sample for the present study consists of male and female nurses working in hospitals. The age range of the participants will be 25 to 40 years.

Sample Size: The sample consist of 60 nurses, of which 30 nurses will be male and 30 will be female.

Sampling method: The sampling method followed will be Purposive sampling technique which is based on the characteristic of the population and the objective of the study.

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Inclusion criteria

1. Both male and female nurses
2. Nurses from only private hospitals
3. Nurses working in all 3 shifts (General, Day and Night)
4. Minimum 2 years work experience required
5. Both married and unmarried nurses

Excluded factors

1. ANM (Auxiliary Nurse Midwives) nurses
2. Internes
3. With any physical and Psychological issues
4. Nurses working at Nursing Homes and clinics

Tools for data collection

For the purpose of this research, data was collected from 25 to 40 years age young nursing professionals as the target sample and then contacted using random and convenience sampling method. The researcher took consent from the participants after explaining the purpose of the study. The researcher then established rapport with the participants, collected socio-demographic details and then administered 'Riff's Scales of Psychological Well-Being' survey.

Socio Demographic profile sheet

Socio demographic profile for each participant consisted of Name, Sex, Age, Marital status, Education, Experience, etc.

Informed Consent form

Consent form was provided to the participants which consisted of the title and purpose of the study and other details pertaining to the research. It was also mentioned that, participants will be free to withdraw from the study if they feel uncomfortable at any time during the research or while taking the survey. Lastly, they were asked to sign the consent form so as to give their approval for participating in the research.

Questionnaire and Scale/Tool used

'Riff's Scales of Psychological Well-Being' scale was used for assessing the psychological well-being of nursing professionals. This scale consists of 42 questions to measure autonomy, Environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations, purpose in life and self-acceptance aspects of well-being. Questions will be divided into these 6 dimensions as mentioned below:

- a) Autonomy: items 1, 7, 13, 19, 25, 31, 37
- b) Environmental mastery: items 2, 8, 14, 20, 26, 32, 38
- c) Personal Growth: items 3, 9, 15, 21, 27, 33, 39
- d) Positive Relations: items: 4, 10, 16, 22, 28, 34, 40
- e) Purpose in life: items: 5, 11, 17, 23, 29, 35, 41
- f) Self-acceptance: items 6, 12, 18, 24, 30, 36, 42

Reliability and validity: Many psychological well-being studies have been carried out across the world. Many researchers have used Riff's Psychological Well-being Scales (RPWBS) tool for the study. Literature review carried out on reliability and validity of RPWBS. The test-retest reliability coefficient of RPWBS was 0.82. The subscales of Self-acceptance, Positive Relation with Others, Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Purpose in

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Life, and Personal Growth were found to be 0.71, 0.77, 0.78, 0.77, 0.70, and 0.78 respectively, which will be statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). The correlation coefficient of RPWBS with Satisfaction with Life, Happiness, and Self-esteem were also found to be: 0.47, 0.58, and 0.46 respectively which were also significant ($P < 0.001$). Hence the RPWBS are valid and reliable and are suitable for use in assessing the psychological well-being.

Score: ‘Riff’s Scales of Psychological Well-Being’ scale was used for assessing the psychological well-being of nursing professionals. This scale consists of 42 questions to measure autonomy, Environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations, purpose in life and self-acceptance aspects of well-being. Questions will be divided into these 6 dimensions as mentioned below:

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- c) Personal Growth: items 3, 9, 15, 21, 27, 33, 39
- d) Positive Relations: items: 4, 10, 16, 22, 28, 34, 40
- e) Purpose in life: items: 5, 11, 17, 23, 29, 35, 41
- f) Self-acceptance: items 6, 12, 18, 24, 30, 36, 42

Procedure for data collection

In the data collection method, target sample were selected based on the exclusion and inclusion criteria. The researcher then established rapport with the participants and de-briefed about the study. An informed consent form was given to the participants and were asked to fill the socio demographic details as in the Name, Sex, Age, Marital status, Education, Ward where employed, Experience, etc.

The participants then de-briefed about the purpose of the study and their right to withdraw at any point of time. Necessary instructions were given to the participants and then the ‘Riff’s Scales of Psychological Well-Being’ 42 version questionnaires were given and requested the participants to answer the questionnaire. On completion of the questionnaire it was collected and scored according to the respected manuals. For online participants, purpose of the study, their right to withdraw at any point of time and necessary instructions were explained at the beginning of the survey, followed by sociodemographic questions and ‘Riff’s Scales of Psychological Well-Being’ 42 version questionnaires were given. Google survey link was then forwarded to participants. Data was collected google response and scored according to the respected manuals.

Procedure for Data Analysis

The data collected through questionnaire was examined. The response was scored according to the norms given by the ‘Riff’s Scales of Psychological Well-Being’. The data was tabulated on Microsoft Excel sheet in order to summarize raw data in a compact form.

After the data collected, it was organized in Excel sheet. For analysis computer program called Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used.

Using SPSS version 16.0, descriptive analysis was carried out for all the sociodemographic variables, Skewness and kurtosis were carried out for the dependent variables, to test the hypothesis, Independent sample ‘t’ test were carried out.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The chapter deals with the analysis, results and discussion of the objectives and hypothesis through the complete statistical analysis of data obtained. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS-16) was used to perform the data entry and statistical analysis.

The purpose of the research was to study psychological well-being among male and female nurses. The sample of the study consisted of 60 nurses, of which 30 nurses were male and 30 were female. The analysis of results was based on the statistical tests of hypothesis and objective. Sixty respondents participated in the study. The statistical analyses of hypothesis were identified using independent 't' test. The objective and hypothesis of the study were below:

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1. Descriptive statistics obtained for male and female nurses.

Independent Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Male	30	163.53	17.663	0.265	-0.119
Female	30	157.467	19.157	0.946	0.747

Table 1. Representing mean, Std. Deviation, Skewness and Kurtosis of male and female nurses

Interpretation

In the table 1.1, showing the mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis of psychological wellbeing of male and female nurses are shown. For the number of respondents, (N=60) a group of nurses with an equal distribution of male nurses (30) and female nurses (30) were selected. The mean and standard deviation of male and female nurses are 163.53 ± 17.663 and 157.467 ± 19.157 respectively.

Inferential Analysis

The data obtained was then scored on the basis of the scoring guidelines and subjected to inferential analysis to test the hypothesis. The analysis used was independent sample 't' test for the hypothesis proposed.

Objective

1. To study the influence of **autonomy** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses
2. To study the influence of **personal growth** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses
3. To study the influence of **environmental mastery** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses
4. To study the influence of **purpose in life** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses
5. To study the influence of **positive relationship with others** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses
6. To study the influence of **self-acceptance** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses

Research hypotheses

1. There will be a significant influence of **autonomy** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses

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2. There will be a significant influence of **personal growth** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses
3. There will be a significant influence of **environmental mastery** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses
4. There will be a significant influence of **purpose in life** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses.
5. There will be a significant influence of **positive relationship with others** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses.
6. There will be a significant influence of **self-acceptance** factor of Psychological well-being among male and female nurses.

Table 2. Independent sample 't' test - psychological wellbeing and male and female nurses

Dependent Variable	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig
Autonomy	Male & Female nurses	2.7	1.186	2.277	56.368	0.292
Environmental Mastery	Male & Female nurses	1.267	1.042	1.216	52.483	0.034
Personal Growth	Male & Female nurses	-0.067	1.256	-0.053	57.799	0.650
Positive Relations	Male & Female nurses	0.033	1.272	0.026	57.653	0.463
Purpose in Life	Male & Female nurses	0.700	1.324	0.529	57.627	0.389
Self-Acceptance	Male & Female nurses	1.433	1.246	1.151	56.949	0.659

Table 2: Independent sample 't' test - psychological wellbeing and male and female nurses

For this research sample (N=60), the psychological well-being factors were analysed using independent 't' test. The results show that, for (N=60) respective value of Autonomy factor $df = 56.368$, $t = 2.277$, $p = 0.292$, therefore it is not significant at 0.05 level, thus null hypothesis is retained which states that there is no significant influence of autonomy factor of psychological well-being among male and female nurses.

Personal growth factor $df = 57.79$, $t = -0.053$, $p = 0.650$ therefore it is not significant at 0.05 level, thus null hypothesis is retained which states that there is no significant influence of personal growth factor of psychological well-being among male and female nurses.

Environmental mastery factor $df = 52.48$, $t = 1.216$, $p = 0.034$ therefore it is significant at 0.05 level, thus alternate hypothesis is retained which states that there is a significant influence of environmental mastery factor of psychological well-being among male and female nurses.

Purpose in life factor $df = 57.627$, $t = 0.529$, $p = 0.389$ therefore it is not significant at 0.05 level, thus null hypothesis is retained which states that there is no significant influence of purpose in life factor of psychological well-being among male and female nurses.

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Positive relationship with others factors $df = 57.653$, $t = 0.026$, $p = 0.463$ therefore it is not significant at 0.05 level, thus null hypothesis is retained which states that there is no significant influence of positive relationship with others factor of psychological well-being among male and female nurses.

Self-acceptance others factor $df = 56.949$, $t = 1.151$, $p = 0.659$ therefore it is not significant at 0.05 level, thus null hypothesis is retained which states that there is no significant influence of self-acceptance factor of psychological well-being among male and female nurses.

DISCUSSION

This chapter explains the findings and results obtained in the present study. The aim of the present research was to study the psychological wellbeing between male and female nurses. The data was collected from 60 nurses working in private hospitals using random convenience sampling and snowball sampling method. Further, to obtain data, psychological wellbeing scale developed by Carol Riff was administered to the participants along with a form specifying socio-demographic details. The data was then analysed using Independent sample 't' test. The obtained results from the analysis with respect to objective and hypotheses were discussed.

The questionnaire comprised of total 42 statements which were to be answered by the male and female nurses working in the private hospitals on Likert scale ranging from “strongly agree to strongly disagree”. Scale measures psychological wellbeing in six areas. They are Autonomy, Personal growth, Environmental mastery, Purpose in life, Positive relations with others, Self-acceptance.

CONCLUSION

The study was to compare the psychological wellbeing among male and female nurses. The objective was to compare psychological wellbeing among male and female nurses. The study did not find any significant influence of psychological factors – Autonomy, Personal growth, Purpose in life, Positive relations with others and Self-acceptance, but study did find significant influence of psychological factor of environmental mastery among male and female nurses. This is because, nursing is a professional mainly female oriented and male nurses find it difficult to adopt to the nursing environment.

Limitations

The major limitation of the current study is that, sample size was only 60. Larger sample size would have given better result. Another major limitation was, psychological wellbeing of nurses might have been influenced by the extraneous variable (Pandemic) due to the current situation. If the geographical area was wider, the study could have shown the significant difference in the result.

Suggestions

There is a scope for further research with a large sample size, with wider geographical area in psychological wellbeing of male and female nurses. Further studies in this field will reflect why there is a significant difference in the environmental mastery between male and female nurses.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declared no conflict of interest.

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