


Work Tenure and Marital Status as Determinants of Job Stress among Nurses in the Inpatient Ward of Hospital X in Kotamobagu

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
<p>Keywords: Work Tenure, Marital Status, Job Stress, Nurses.</p>	<p>Nurses are the frontline of healthcare services and are highly vulnerable to work-related stress due to complex tasks and heavy responsibilities. This study aimed to analyze the relationship between work tenure and marital status with job stress among nurses in the inpatient ward of Hospital X in Kotamobagu. A quantitative study with a cross-sectional design and correlational analysis was conducted. The population consisted of 272 nurses, from which 73 respondents were selected using simple random sampling. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire covering three main variables: work tenure, marital status, and job stress. Univariate analysis was used to describe frequency distributions, and bivariate analysis using the Chi-Square test was applied to examine associations between independent and dependent variables. The findings showed that work tenure ($p = 0.000$) and marital status ($p = 0.004$) were significantly associated with nurses' job stress. Nurses with longer work tenure (≥ 3 years) and those who were married were more likely to experience job stress. Emotional support, a healthy work environment, and adequate rest are essential to effectively manage job stress among nurses.</p>
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INTRODUCTION

Job stress among nurses is a critical issue in healthcare systems worldwide. Nurses are often exposed to high workloads, time pressures, emotional demands, and complex patient care situations that place them at risk of stress-related problems (Noor et al., 2023). Prolonged stress can lead to physical and psychological health issues, decreased job satisfaction, reduced quality of care, and even increased turnover rates (Adamopoulos & Syrou, 2022; Hairil Akbar et al., 2024). As frontline healthcare workers, nurses' well-being is essential for ensuring optimal patient outcomes, making the study of work-related stress highly relevant (Robins-Browne et al., 2022).

Various factors contribute to job stress among nurses, including organizational structure, work environment, workload, interpersonal relationships, and individual characteristics (Sarıköse & Göktepe, 2022). Previous studies have emphasized the

importance of personal and demographic factors such as age, gender, marital status, and work tenure in shaping how nurses perceive and respond to stressors in the workplace (Wu et al., 2022). Understanding these determinants is crucial to developing interventions that address both organizational and personal dimensions of stress (ERSEN et al., 2024).

Work tenure, or length of service, has been identified as an important predictor of stress levels among nurses (Winters, 2019). Nurses with shorter work experience may experience higher stress due to limited coping strategies, lack of confidence, and insufficient adaptation to workplace demands (Narbona-Gálvez et al., 2024). Conversely, nurses with longer tenure may encounter cumulative stress over time, often resulting from workload demands and organizational changes. Therefore, analyzing the relationship between work tenure and job stress provides valuable insights into the dynamics of stress across different stages of a nurse's career (Kim & Lee, 2019).

Marital status is another determinant that has been shown to influence stress levels. Married nurses may benefit from emotional and social support from their spouses and families, which can serve as a buffer against occupational stress (Abbas et al., 2019). However, marital responsibilities can also contribute to additional pressures, particularly when combined with the demanding nature of nursing work. Single nurses, on the other hand, may face challenges of limited social support but may have greater flexibility in managing work demands (Broetje et al., 2020). These contrasting dynamics highlight the importance of exploring marital status in relation to work stress among nurses (Huang et al., 2023).

Despite growing evidence on the determinants of job stress, limited studies have specifically focused on the combined effects of work tenure and marital status among nurses in inpatient settings in Indonesia. Kotamobagu, as a developing region, faces unique healthcare challenges, including high patient loads and limited resources, which may exacerbate nurses' stress levels. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the relationship between work tenure and marital status with job stress among nurses in the inpatient ward of Hospital X in Kotamobagu.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative research approach with a correlational analytic method and a cross-sectional design. The study aimed to examine the relationship between work tenure and marital status with job stress among nurses in the inpatient ward of Hospital X in Kotamobagu. The research was conducted at Hospital X in Kotamobagu. Data collection was carried out between January and March 2025.

The study population comprised all nurses working at Hospital X, totaling 272 individuals. The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula with a margin of error of 10%, resulting in a minimum sample of 73 respondents. Simple random sampling was applied to select participants, taking into account inclusion and exclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria included nurses who had worked for at least six months in the inpatient ward and were willing to participate by completing the questionnaire. Nurses who did not meet these criteria were excluded from the study.

The independent variables in this study were work tenure and marital status of nurses, while the dependent variable was job stress. Data were collected using both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were obtained through a structured questionnaire completed by the respondents, while secondary data were gathered from hospital records and documentation.

Data processing involved several steps, including editing (reviewing and correcting errors in the questionnaires), coding (assigning codes to categorical responses), cleaning (verifying accuracy of entered data), and data entry into the software for analysis. Data analysis consisted of univariate and bivariate analyses. Univariate analysis was used to describe the frequency distribution and percentage of study variables. Bivariate analysis was performed using the Chi-Square test to examine the relationship between work tenure, marital status, and job stress among nurses. Ethical approval for this study was obtained from Hospital X in Kotamobagu. Permission to conduct the research was formally requested from the hospital management. Written informed consent was obtained from each respondent, and confidentiality of personal data was strictly maintained.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A total of 73 nurses participated in this study. Table 1 presents the distribution of respondents based on age, education, marital status, work tenure, and job stress. The majority of respondents were older than 30 years (54.8%), had a Bachelor's degree (41.1%), were married (61.6%), and had work tenure of ≥ 3 years (64.4%). More than half of the respondents (57.5%) reported experiencing job stress.

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents (n = 73)

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age	≤ 30 years	33	45.2
	> 30 years	40	54.8
Education	Diploma (DIII)	19	26.0
	Bachelor (S1)	30	41.1
	Ners	24	32.9
Marital status	Single	25	34.2
	Married	45	61.6
	Divorced	3	4.1
Work tenure	< 3 years	26	35.6
	≥ 3 years	47	64.4
Job stress	Yes	42	57.5
	No	31	42.5

Table 2 shows the relationship between work tenure and job stress. Of the 47 respondents with ≥ 3 years of service, 36 (76.6%) reported job stress, while only 11 (23.4%) did not. Conversely, among 26 respondents with < 3 years of service, 20 (76.9%) did not experience job stress, while only 6 (23.1%) did. The Chi-Square test showed a statistically significant relationship ($p = 0.000$), indicating that longer work tenure was associated with a higher likelihood of experiencing job stress.

Table 2. Relationship between Work Tenure and Job Stress

Work Tenure	Job Stress (n, %)	No Stress (n, %)	Total (n, %)	p-value
≥ 3 years	36 (76.6)	11 (23.4)	47 (100.0)	0.000
< 3 years	6 (23.1)	20 (76.9)	26 (100.0)	
Total	42 (57.5)	31 (42.5)	73 (100.0)	

Table 3 shows the relationship between marital status and job stress. Among married respondents, 35 (77.8%) experienced stress, while only 10 (22.2%) did not. In contrast, 72% of unmarried respondents reported no job stress. Interestingly, all respondents who were divorced ($n = 3$) reported no job stress. The Chi-Square test revealed a significant association between marital status and job stress ($p = 0.004$).

Table 3. Relationship between Marital Status and Job Stress

Marital Status	Job Stress (n, %)	No Stress (n, %)	Total (n, %)	p-value
Single	7 (28.0)	18 (72.0)	25 (100.0)	0.004
Married	35 (77.8)	10 (22.2)	45 (100.0)	
Divorced	0 (0.0)	3 (100.0)	3 (100.0)	
Total	42 (57.5)	31 (42.5)	73 (100.0)	

The results of this study demonstrated that both work tenure and marital status were significantly associated with job stress among nurses. Nurses with longer work tenure (≥ 3 years) had a higher prevalence of stress compared to those with shorter tenure. Furthermore, married nurses experienced higher levels of job stress compared to single or divorced nurses.

The present study revealed that both work tenure and marital status were significantly associated with job stress among nurses in the inpatient ward of Hospital X in Kotamobagu. Specifically, nurses with longer work tenure (≥ 3 years) were more likely to experience job stress compared to those with shorter tenure. Similarly, married nurses reported higher levels of job stress than their single or divorced counterparts (Vaghar & Masrour, 2019). These findings suggest that personal and occupational factors jointly contribute to the stress levels experienced by nurses.

The association between longer work tenure and higher job stress may be explained by cumulative occupational demands. Nurses with extended years of service often bear greater responsibilities, face higher patient loads, and may be more frequently exposed to emotionally challenging situations (Cranage & Foster, 2022). Over time, these factors can accumulate and increase perceived stress, especially in high-demand inpatient settings (Seehausen et al., 2025). Conversely, nurses with shorter tenure may experience stress differently, as their workload might be less intensive, and they may not yet carry the same level of responsibility.

Marital status also appeared to influence nurses' stress levels. Married nurses may face dual responsibilities, balancing demanding professional roles with family obligations. This additional burden can exacerbate stress, particularly when emotional support or resources from family are insufficient (Ashipala & Natanael, 2022). In contrast, single or divorced nurses may have fewer family-related responsibilities, allowing more flexibility in managing work demands (Hussein et al., 2025). Interestingly, the study found that all divorced respondents

reported no job stress, which might reflect individual coping strategies or variations in family responsibilities.

These findings underscore the importance of addressing both organizational and personal factors in stress management programs for nurses. Hospital management should consider interventions such as workload adjustments, provision of emotional support, stress reduction workshops, and promoting a supportive work environment (Paguio et al., 2020). Additionally, recognizing the impact of family dynamics and marital responsibilities on nurses' well-being can inform tailored support mechanisms, such as counseling services or flexible work schedules (Akbar et al., 2020).

Despite the significant findings, this study has some limitations. The cross-sectional design limits the ability to establish causal relationships, and the sample was restricted to nurses in a single hospital, which may affect the generalizability of the results. Future research should consider longitudinal designs and include multiple hospitals to provide more comprehensive insights into the determinants of job stress among nurses.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrated that work tenure and marital status are significant determinants of job stress among nurses in the inpatient ward of Hospital X in Kotamobagu. Nurses with longer work tenure (≥ 3 years) were more likely to experience job stress, and married nurses reported higher stress levels compared to single or divorced nurses. These findings highlight the importance of considering both occupational and personal factors when addressing stress in nursing staff. Hospital management and nurses should implement stress management strategies, including emotional support, workload adjustments, and maintaining a healthy work-life balance, to effectively reduce job stress among nurses.

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