

Exploring the Links Between Job Stress, Fulfillment, and Effectiveness Among Nurses in Negros Oriental's Public Hospitals

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Abstract. This study aimed to determine the levels of job stress, job satisfaction, and job performance among nurses in Negros Oriental's public hospitals and their relationships. The respondents of this study were 358 nurses from selected public hospitals in the province. The researcher utilized standardized questionnaires and employed the chi-square test, Spearman's rank order correlation, and percentage in treating the data. The survey was descriptive and correlational. The findings of the study revealed that the extent of the respondents' occupational stress was considered high, specifically in terms of (a) workload pressure, (b) dealing with patients and relatives, and (c) confidence and competence in the role. On the other hand, the findings also revealed that only the civil status of the nurses has a significant relationship with their overall job stress, and also have a substantial relationship between the nurses' assigned area and their level of job satisfaction.

Keywords: Civil status; Job stress; Promotion; Relationship with co-workers; Satisfaction.

1.0 Introduction

People are considered an asset in any organization. Since they are considered the most critical resource, they must be healthy to be effective and productive. The idea that stress affects health is widely accepted. Organizations are busy developing stress management programs to reduce and prevent the adverse health effects associated with workplace stress. Worstress-related stress occurs as a response to the demands and pressures of work that are not aligned with the skills and knowledge of the employees, challenging their ability to cope. Work-related stress occurs in a wide range of work circumstances, such as feeling unsupported by one's head or colleagues, or having no control over how work is done, which can hinder creativity and innovation (WHO, 2020). The healthcare sector globally faces significant challenges in ensuring the well-being of its workforce while maintaining high standards of patient care. Nurses, as frontline caregivers, often bear the brunt of these challenges, grappling with occupational stressors that can adversely affect their job satisfaction and performance (Willis et al., 2021).

In Negros Oriental, a province in the Philippines, government hospitals serve as vital pillars of healthcare delivery, catering to the needs of diverse communities. Within this local context, nurses encounter a unique set of challenges shaped by resource limitations, cultural dynamics, and regional healthcare policies (Flores, 2022). Understanding the specific stressors faced by nurses in government hospitals in Negros Oriental is crucial for tailoring interventions that address local needs and promote sustainable healthcare practices (Ragay, 2019). A study

conducted among staff nurses in Tuguegarao City found that the occupational stress level was high, with time pressure being the most common stressor (Dela Cruz et al., 2019). Aside from that, it was found that the most frequent source of stressors is the workload, and it was negatively related to job satisfaction and the perceived quality of care (Bautista et al., 2019). These reasons are also observed in the local setting, where LGU-funded public hospitals are abundant.

Despite the growing body of literature on occupational stress, job satisfaction, and job performance among nurses, a notable gap remains in research focusing on government hospital settings in Negros Oriental. While studies conducted in other regions offer valuable insights, the applicability of their findings to the local context may be limited due to variations in healthcare systems, cultural norms, and organizational structures. Therefore, there is a pressing need for research that specifically examines the experiences of nurses in government hospitals in Negros Oriental to fill this crucial gap in the literature. Thus, this study aimed to answer the following questions: First, what is the level of occupational stress among nurses in terms of workload pressures, dealing with patients and relatives, and confidence and competence in their role? Second, what is the level of job satisfaction of nurses in terms of pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, rewards, and the nature of work? Third, what is the level of job performance of nurses in terms of leadership, planning/evaluation, teaching/collaboration, interpersonal relations/communication, and professional development? Fourth, is there a significant relationship between job stress and the level of job satisfaction of nurses in selected government hospitals in the province of Negros Oriental? Fifth, is there a significant relationship between job stress and the level of job performance of the nurses? Sixth, is there a significant relationship between the level of job satisfaction and the level of job performance of nurses in selected government hospitals in the province of Negros Oriental? Lastly, is there a significant relationship between occupational stress, job satisfaction, and job performance in terms of their demographic profile? Moreover, this study aims to test the following hypotheses: H0: There is no significant relationship between occupational stress and the level of job satisfaction and performance of nurses. H1: There is no significant relationship between occupational stress and the level of job satisfaction and performance of nurses, controlling for their demographic profile.

In comparison, existing studies predominantly focus on healthcare settings in urban areas or high-income countries, neglecting the unique challenges faced by nurses in resource-constrained settings, such as government hospitals in Negros Oriental. By contrast, this study aims to bridge the gap by providing a nuanced understanding of the interplay between occupational stress, job satisfaction, and job performance among nurses in a rural, low-resource setting. By contextualizing the findings within the local healthcare landscape, this research aims to contribute valuable insights that can inform evidence-based interventions tailored to the needs of nurses in Negros Oriental and similar settings globally. Results will be crucial for crafting interventions that address future problems related to occupational stress among government nurses.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Research Design

The study is a descriptive, comparative, and correlational study. A correlational study design was utilized to investigate the research questions. The relationships among occupational stress, job satisfaction, and job performance are explored. The effects of personal characteristics, including age, marital status, nursing education, nursing experience, and type of unit, on occupational stress, job satisfaction, and job performance were also investigated.

2.2 Research Locale

The study was conducted on a sample of nurses working in eighteen (18) health units and public (government-owned) hospitals from selected areas, specifically in La Libertad, Jimalalud, Tayasan, Ayungon, Bindoy, Manjuyod, Tanjay, Dumaguete City, Dauin, Bacong, Sibulan, Vallehermoso, Inapoy-Mabinay, Mabinay Proper, Luz-Sikatuna, Canlaon City, and Guihulngan City, wherein the researcher is residing. The total number of nurses in each hospital ranges from 7 to 85, comprising Registered Nurses and Midwives (RN/M), Public Health Nurses (PHN), Diploma-trained nurses, and Doctors of Medicine in various specializations.

2.3 Research Participants

The respondents of the study are the 358 nurses from the selected public hospitals of the province in Negros Oriental specifically from Guihulngan City (29), La Libertad (14), Jimalalud (17), Tayasan (17), Ayungon (12), Bindoy (28), Manjuyod (16), Tanjay (38), Dumaguete City (83), Dauin (8), Bacong (7), Sibulan (11), Vallehermoso

(9), Inapoy-Mabinay (14), Mabinay Proper (16), Luz-Sikatuna (9) and Canlaon City (12). These nurses were chosen using a systematic sampling design, in which every minute, a nurse on the list will be included in the study. The nurses who participated in this research study met the following eligibility criteria: aged 25 years or above, male or female, and either casual or regular staff nurses in the three district hospitals for at least 1 year, with the ability to understand English and a willingness to participate in the study. They should be working in any area of the hospital, including those holding administrative positions.

2.4 Research Instrument

To investigate how workplace stress, contentment with their jobs, and how well they performed were connected, the researcher employed three different measurement tools: the Nurse Stress Index (Harris, 1989), the Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1997), and the Six Dimension Scale of Nursing Performance (Schwirian, 1978).

The three instruments are part of a questionnaire with sections, each consisting of an instrument. The questionnaire also includes a demographic instrument to identify and assess personal characteristics such as age, gender, nursing education (registered, diploma, master's), nursing experience, and the department where the nurse works. This is because personal characteristics have been reported to influence the perception of stress, job satisfaction, and job performance (Chinweuba, 2007; Ernst et al., 2004).

The NSI (Harris, 1989) aims to identify sources of stress among nurses in hospital and community settings. Meanwhile, the JSS aims to assess the degree to which people like their jobs (Spector, 1997). The JSS is a self-report instrument that provides an overall job satisfaction score after assessing nine facets or sub-scales, namely, pay/promotion/and supervision. The reliability and validity of the instrument were established with an overall Cronbach's alpha score of .91 (Spector, 1997).

Finally, the Six Dimension Scale of Nursing Performance (Schwirian, 1978) assesses nurses' job performance. This refers to the person's effectiveness in carrying out their roles and responsibilities related to patient care. The instrument is self-reported, comprising five subscales and 32 items. The sub-scales include: Leadership, Planning/Evaluation, Teaching/Collaboration, Interpersonal Relations/Communication, and Professional Development. Participants were asked to rate the items on how often they perform the behavior/item to assess both frequency and quality of performance. The reliability and validity of the 6-DSNP were established, and Cronbach's alpha coefficients for each subscale ranged from .90 to .97 (Schwirian, 1978).

The researcher also applied the following interpretations to describe the levels of occupational stress, job satisfaction, and job performance among nurses.

Table 1. *Mean Interpretation*

Verbal Description	Scale Value	Level of Job Satisfaction	Explanation
Strongly Agree (SA)	4.21 -5.00	Very High (VH)	Job satisfaction is manifested at 81%-100% of the time.
Agree (A)	3.41 - 4.20	High (H)	Job satisfaction is manifested at 61%-80% of the time.
Moderately Agree (MA)	2.61 - 3.40	Moderate (M)	Job satisfaction is manifested at 41%-60% of the time.
Disagree (D)	1.81 - 2.60	Low (L)	Job satisfaction is manifested at 21%-40% of the time.
Strongly Disagree (SD)	1.00 - 2.60	Very Low (VL)	Job satisfaction is manifested at 1%-20% of the time.

2.5 Data Gathering Procedure

The findings of the study were gathered between 2023 and 2024, as the questionnaires were distributed after the pandemic and due to the strict protocols implemented throughout the province. The study was conducted after getting approval from the respective hospital administrators, Medical Chiefs, and Chief Nurses.

Actual and online meetings were organized with the nurses through the Heads/medical Chiefs of the hospitals and the Directors of Nursing Services. The purpose of the study, the methods of data collection, and the study's time frame were explained to the nurses during the meetings. The researcher explained to the nurses that they are free to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. The researcher also made clear that there will be no financial or any other form of gain from the nurses' participation. The nurses were then invited to participate in

the study, and the questionnaires were distributed to those who volunteered.

To maximize participation among nurses and response rates, the researcher recruited assistants. The research assistants are responsible for distributing and collecting completed questionnaires from nurses in various wards/units who are unable to attend the actual/virtual meetings but volunteer to participate in the study. The assistants then collected the completed questionnaires from their assigned wards/units daily.

Upon distributing the questionnaires, the participants were instructed to answer as honestly as possible. First, they were required to read the information letter and the informed consent form. If they volunteer, they will be made to sign the consent form. They were given enough time to answer the questionnaire. The results were then consolidated and tallied using MS Excel and were analyzed and interpreted.

2.6 Ethical Considerations

Research involving human participants necessitates careful attention to safeguarding their rights. This ethical obligation aims to protect their dignity and privacy while also reducing any potential harm they might face (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

Permission was sought from the hospital administrators to conduct research in each of the district hospitals. Consent was also required from the nurses, and they were asked to sign the consent form. To guarantee voluntary participation, a form detailing the study's purpose and participants' right to withdraw at any point without consequence accompanied the questionnaires. Additionally, the surveys were designed without any identifying information to ensure anonymity and confidentiality.

Consultations were conducted to ensure that the research topic is sound, significant, and ethically sound to pursue. Throughout the entire data research process, the researcher has ensured that a non-judgmental attitude is maintained to avoid bias.

3.0 Results and Discussion

3.1 Level of Occupational Stress of Nurses

In terms of Workload Pressures

Table 2 reveals that the overall level of occupational stress among nurses is “high,” as indicated by the composite weighted mean of 3.93. Specifically, the nurses manifested high occupational stress due to the time pressure and deadlines (Mean = 4.04), which ranks first among all indicators, followed by fluctuations in their workload (Mean = 4.01), as well as conflict with the demands of others for their time at work (Mean = 3.95).

Table 2. *Level of Occupational Stress of Nurses in terms of Workload Pressures (n = 358)*

	Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1	Time pressures and deadlines	4.04	High
2	Fluctuations in workload	4.01	High
3	The demands of others for my time at work are in conflict	3.96	High
4	I spend my time ‘fighting fires’ rather than working to a plan	3.95	High
5	Shortage of essential resources	3.95	High
6	Deciding priorities	3.93	High
7	My nursing and administrative roles conflict	3.90	High
8	I have too little time in which to do what is expected of me	3.88	High
9	Trivial tasks interfere with my professional role	3.87	High
10	Management expects me to interrupt my work for new priorities	3.79	High
	Composite	3.93	High

This highlights the diverse origins of stress that nurses experience. Their work exposes them to various pressures, including time limitations, fluctuating workloads, and the need to navigate conflicting expectations from different individuals within the healthcare system. The daily time pressures of caregiving, medication administration, documentation, and emergency response contribute significantly to their stress. Furthermore, the conflicting demands from patients, hospital policies, and other stakeholders create additional stress as nurses attempt to find a balance. Wazqar (2019) emphasizes that this time pressure intensifies stress as nurses strive for quality care amidst time constraints, underscoring the need for healthcare organizations to acknowledge and mitigate these stressors for a healthier nursing workforce.

In terms of Dealing with Patients and Relatives

Table 3 reveals the extent of occupational stress among nurses as “High” in terms of difficulty dealing with aggressive individuals (Mean = 4.00), challenging patients (Mean = 3.99), and relatives (Mean = 3.98). This challenging aspect of their work can impact their emotional well-being and job satisfaction. As noted in the study of Najafi et al. (2018), aggressive behavior poses a direct threat to the personal safety of nurses. Experiencing aggression from those they are trying to help can be emotionally distressing. It may lead to feelings of frustration, helplessness, and a sense of failure in providing the necessary care and support.

Table 3. *Level of Occupational Stress of Nurses in terms of Dealing with Patients and Relatives (n = 358)*

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1 Difficulty in dealing with aggressive people	4.00	High
2 Difficult patients	3.99	High
3 Dealing with relatives	3.98	High
4 Involvement with life and death situations	3.91	High
5 Bereavement counseling	3.89	High
Composite	3.95	High

Moreover, involvement with life and death situations (Mean = 3.91) and bereavement counseling (Mean = 3.89) also display a “high” level of occupational stress among the nurses. Observing the pain and emotional distress of patients and their families can be emotionally exhausting for nurses, contributing to significant stress levels. This finding aligns with Omran et al.'s (2021) research, which highlights nurses' inherent empathy and compassion for their patients.

In conclusion, healthcare facilities can empower nurses to better manage the stress of aggressive incidents by fostering a supportive work environment, establishing clear protocols for addressing aggression, and ensuring readily available resources, such as security. Furthermore, institutions should prioritize robust support systems for nurses, including counseling, debriefing, and reflective practices. Encouraging self-care and cultivating a culture that values the well-being of healthcare workers can aid nurses in navigating the emotional demands of their profession (WHO, 2021).

In terms of Confidence and Competence in the Role

Table 4 reflects the level of occupational stress of nurses in terms of confidence and competence. The findings reveal that bringing about change in staff/organization (Mean = 3.77) and tasks outside of their competence (Mean = 3.73) are considered “high”. This means that nurses are still capable and continue to embrace changes in their organization, as well as tasks given, even if they are outside of their competence. The ability of nurses to adapt to changes within their organization and take on tasks outside their traditional areas of competence reflects their resilience, flexibility, and dedication to providing high-quality patient care.

Table 4. *Level of Occupational Stress of Nurses in terms of Confidence and Competence in the Role (n = 358)*

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1 Bringing about change in staff/organization	3.77	High
2 Tasks outside of my competence	3.73	High
3 Provides specialized training for the present task	3.72	High
4 Confidence about the degree or area of my responsibility	3.58	High
5 Coping with new technology	3.53	High
Composite	3.67	High

This finding is consistent with Lyng et al.'s (2021) study, which determined that nurses are strongly motivated by a commitment to their patients' well-being. This dedication to providing optimal care drives them to adapt to new challenges and assume extra responsibilities, even those beyond their typical duties.

3.2 Level of Satisfaction of Nurses

In terms of Pay, Promotion, and Supervision

The level of job satisfaction among nurses in terms of pay, promotion, and supervision is “high,” as revealed in Table 5, with a composite mean of 3.97. This indicates that the nurses are satisfied with the opportunities for promotion in their job (Mean = 4.17) and the benefits they receive (Mean = 4.02). Nurses appreciate organizations that offer clear and attainable career advancement paths. Opportunities for promotion, whether through hierarchical progression or specialized roles, contribute to job satisfaction by recognizing and rewarding their skills and dedication.

Table 5. *Level of Satisfaction of Nurses in Terms of Pay, Promotion, and Supervision (n = 358)*

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation	Level of Job Satisfaction
1 There are chances for promotion in my job.	4.17	Agree	High
2 Those who do well on the job stand a fair chance of being promoted.	4.06	Agree	High
3 I am satisfied with the benefits I receive.	4.02	Agree	High
4 I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do.	3.96	Agree	High
5 Communications seem good within this organization.	3.87	Agree	High
6 My supervisor offers equal treatment to all workers.	3.86	Agree	High
7 I am satisfied with my chances for promotion.	3.85	Agree	High
Composite	3.97	Agree	High

This result aligns with Avery et al.'s (2022) finding that clear and just promotion policies enhance nurses' job satisfaction. When promotion criteria are transparent and the process is fair, nurses are more likely to believe their hard work and accomplishments are acknowledged and appreciated.

In terms of Fringe Benefits and Rewards

Table 6 reveals a “high” level of satisfaction when efforts are rewarded (Mean = 3.77), enough rewards for those who work (Mean = 3.58), as well as being appreciated for their work (Mean = 3.51).

Table 6. *Level of Satisfaction of Nurses in Terms of Fringe Benefits and Rewards (n = 358)*

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation	Level of Job Satisfaction
1 People get ahead as fast here as they do in other places.	3.82	Agree	High
2 I feel my efforts are rewarded the way they should be.	3.77	Agree	High
3 The benefit package we have is equitable.	3.66	Agree	High
4 The benefits we receive are as good as most other organizations offer.	3.65	Agree	High
5 There are enough rewards for those who work here.	3.58	Agree	High
6 I feel that the work I do is appreciated.	3.51	Agree	High
7 I am satisfied with the benefits and rewards given to us.	3.39	Moderately Agree	Moderate
Composite	3.62	Agree	High

High job satisfaction among nurses yields significant positive effects for both the nurses themselves and the entire healthcare organization. As Labrague & Ross (2020) emphasized, sufficient benefits and rewards can act as strong motivators, inspiring nurses to perform optimally and contribute positively to their work environment.

In terms of the Nature of Work

Table 7 displays a “high” level of satisfaction in terms of the nature of work among the respondents. This denotes that nurses are more likely to be satisfied when work processes are streamlined and efficient. This includes setting clear goals for the organization (Mean = 4.15), providing fully explained work assignments (Mean = 3.95), and being aware of what is happening within the organization (Mean = 3.53). The finding aligns with the results of Zibrowski et al. (2018), which indicate that the efficiency and streamlining of work processes are critical factors in determining the job satisfaction of nurses. When work processes are well-organized, streamlined, and supported by appropriate resources, nurses can perform their duties more effectively and experience higher levels of job satisfaction.

Table 7. *Level of Satisfaction of Nurses in Terms of Nature of Work (n = 358)*

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation	Level of Job Satisfaction
1 The goals of this organization are clearly given to me.	4.15	Agree	High
2 Work assignments are fully explained.	3.95	Agree	High
3 My job is enjoyable.	3.93	Agree	High
4 I like my supervisor.	3.87	Agree	High
5 I feel that my job is very meaningful.	3.85	Agree	High
6 I am aware of what is going on with the organization.	3.53	Agree	High
Composite	3.88	Agree	High

Meanwhile, open and effective communication among healthcare team members, including nurses and heads, also enhances workflow. Clear communication helps prevent misunderstandings, reduces errors, and fosters a positive work environment. As presented in the Table, nurses like and are satisfied with their supervisor (Mean = 3.87) and find their job to be meaningful (Mean = 3.85). This result is also evident in Specchia's (2021) study, which shows that when nurses feel supported by their leaders, they are more likely to be satisfied with the overall nature of their work.

3.3 Level of Job Performance of Nurses

In terms of Nurses in terms of Leadership

Table 8 indicates that, in terms of leadership, the level of job performance among the respondents is described as "satisfactory" with a composite weighted mean of 3.98. Nurses are generally satisfied with their leaders/supervisors in terms of providing praise and recognition for achievements (Mean = 4.20) and the proper coordination of nursing care and medical plan of care (Mean = 4.16). This means that effective leadership, which acknowledges and appreciates the contributions of nursing staff, can significantly enhance their performance at work.

Table 8. *Level of Job Performance of Nurses in terms of Leadership (n = 358)*

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1 Give praise and recognition for achievement to those under his/her direction.	4.20	Satisfactory
2 Coordinate the plan of nursing care with the medical plan of care.	4.16	Satisfactory
3 Teach a patient's family members about the patient's needs.	4.09	Satisfactory
4 Teach preventive health measures to patients and their families.	3.88	Satisfactory
5 Identify and include in nursing care plans anticipated changes in patient's conditions.	3.83	Satisfactory
6 Identify and use community resources in developing a plan of care for a patient and his/her family.	3.76	Satisfactory
Composite	3.98	Satisfactory

The finding aligns with that of Fong-Yi et al. (2020), which affirms that employees inspired by transformational leadership are more likely to immerse themselves in their work, and, in turn, this is likely to result in better task performance and helping behaviors. Nurses appreciate leaders who make them feel valued and recognized for their hard work and dedication.

In terms of Nurses in terms of Planning and Evaluation

As shown in Table 9, this reflected a "satisfactory" level of job performance among nurses, with a composite weighted mean of 3.80. The Table includes evaluating the results of nursing care (Mean = 3.93) and developing a plan of nursing care for a patient (Mean = 3.72). Nurses are successfully implementing the plans they have devised for nursing care. This also involves promoting the inclusion of patients' decisions and desires (Mean 3.87), as well as performing technical procedures (Mean = 3.68), administering medications, and providing patient care in a manner that aligns with established standards and protocols.

Table 9. *Level of Job Performance of Nurses in terms of Planning and Evaluation (n = 358)*

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1 Evaluate results of nursing care.	3.93	Satisfactory
2 Promote the inclusion of the patient's decisions and desires concerning his/her care.	3.87	Satisfactory
3 Develop a plan of nursing care for a patient.	3.72	Satisfactory
4 Perform technical procedures: e.g. oral suctioning, IV therapy, catheter care, and dressing changes.	3.68	Satisfactory
Composite	3.80	Satisfactory

In summary, when nurses demonstrate satisfactory job performance in planning and evaluation, it suggests they are skilled, adaptable, and dedicated to ongoing development. This proficiency has a positive impact on patient care, efficiency, teamwork, and the overall quality of healthcare (Penconek et al., 2021).

In terms of Nurses in terms of Teaching and Collaboration

Table 10 indicates a "Satisfactory" level (composite mean of 3.89) in teaching and collaboration. Specific indicators, such as developing innovative methods and materials (Mean = 3.99) and communicating with patients with acceptance and concern (Mean = 3.99), suggest that nurses effectively share their knowledge and demonstrate empathy towards colleagues, patients, and other stakeholders.

Table 10. *Level of Job Performance of Nurses in terms of Teaching and Collaboration (n = 358)*

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1 Develop innovative methods and materials for teaching patients.	3.99	Satisfactory
2 Communicate a feeling of acceptance of each patient and a concern for the patient's welfare.	3.99	Satisfactory
3 Seek assistance when necessary.	3.97	Satisfactory
4 Identify and include immediate patient needs in the plan of nursing care.	3.91	Satisfactory
5 Adapt teaching methods and materials to the understanding of the particular audience: e.g. age of the patient, educational background, and sensory deprivation.	3.79	
6 Use mechanical devices: e.g. suction machine, cardiac monitor, and respirator.	3.67	
Composite	3.89	Satisfactory

This aligns with Wei et al.'s (2020) study, which emphasizes the crucial role of collaboration in healthcare. Satisfactory performance in this area implies that nurses work effectively with various healthcare professionals, making positive contributions to interdisciplinary teams and fostering a collaborative and supportive environment with patients and other stakeholders.

In terms of Nurses in terms of Interpersonal Relations and Communication

When the level of job performance among nurses is “Satisfactory” in terms of being calm and competent in emergencies (Mean = 4.12), able to explain nursing procedures to a patient prior to performing (Mean = 4.04) and initiate planning and evaluation of nursing care (Mean = 3.95, this implies that nurses are excelling in their interactions with both colleagues and patients. This idea is presented with the findings as shown in Table 11. In a study by Kwame & Petrucka (2020), it is suggested that explaining nursing procedures before performing them helps alleviate patient anxiety, builds trust, and enhances patient satisfaction.

Table 11. *Level of Job Performance of Nurses in terms of Interpersonal Relations and Communications (n = 358)*

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1 Function calmly and competently in emergencies.	4.12	Satisfactory
2 Explain nursing procedures to a patient before performing them.	4.04	Satisfactory
3 Help a patient communicate with others.	4.03	Satisfactory
4 Initiate planning and evaluation of nursing care with others.	3.95	Satisfactory
5 Give emotional support to the family of a dying patient.	3.80	Satisfactory
6 Verbally communicate facts, ideas, and feelings to other healthcare team members.	3.75	Satisfactory
Composite	3.95	Satisfactory

Moreover, satisfactory performance in interpersonal relations and communication highlights that nurses possess not only strong clinical skills but also excel in the human elements of healthcare. This includes facilitating patient communication (Mean = 4.03), providing emotional support to families of patients nearing the end of life (Mean = 3.80), and effectively communicating facts, ideas, and feelings with other healthcare team members (Mean = 3.75). Their proficiency in these areas fosters a supportive and patient-centered healthcare environment, a finding echoed in Kwame et al.'s (2020) study.

In terms of Nurses in terms of Professional Development

Nurses' satisfactory performance in professional development demonstrates a commitment to ongoing learning and improvement, which not only benefits the individual but also enhances the quality of patient care and advances the nursing profession as a whole (Vazquez-Calatayud et al., 2021).

Table 12. *Level of Job Performance of Nurses in terms of Professional Development (n = 358)*

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1 Demonstrate knowledge of the ethics of nursing.	4.23	Very Satisfactory
2 Demonstrate knowledge of the legal boundaries of nursing.	4.21	Very Satisfactory
3 Accept and use constructive criticism.	4.08	Satisfactory
4 Display a generally positive attitude.	4.04	Satisfactory
5 Maintain high standards of performance.	4.00	Satisfactory
6 Assume new responsibilities within the limits of capabilities.	3.98	Satisfactory
7 Demonstrate self-confidence.	3.95	Satisfactory
8 Accept responsibility for own actions.	3.94	Satisfactory
9 Display self-direction.	3.91	Satisfactory
10 Use learning opportunities for ongoing personal and professional growth.	3.86	Satisfactory
Composite	4.02	Satisfactory

This aligns with the data in Table 3.11. Mlambo, Silen, and McGrath (2021) argue that organizations should adequately fund and provide access to continuing professional development, while nurses should actively participate to maintain high standards of competent practice.

3.4 Relationship between Occupational Stress and Level of Job Satisfaction of Nurses

Table 13 presents the data in identifying the relationship between occupational stress and the level of job satisfaction of nurses. Using Spearman Rank Order Correlation, it is shown that workload pressures ($p < .001$; $r_s = -0.235$) and dealing with patients and relatives ($p < .001$; $r_s = -0.410$) are significantly and inversely related to the level of satisfaction among nurses. This suggests an inverse correlation: as nurses experience greater stress in these particular areas, their overall job satisfaction tends to decrease. Essentially, higher stress in these specific domains

is associated with lower job satisfaction among nurses.

Table 13. Relationship between Occupational Stress and Level of Job Satisfaction of Nurses (n=358)

Stress Variables Correlated to Overall Job Satisfaction	r_s	P-value	Remark	Significant
Workload Pressures	-0.235	<.001	Reject H_{01}	Significant
Dealing with Patients & Relatives	-0.410	<.001	Reject H_{01}	Significant
Confidence & Competence in the Role	0.165	0.002	Reject H_{01}	Significant

Level of significance = 0.05

Nurses often work in demanding environments characterized by high workloads, which include managing multiple patients, handling administrative tasks, and responding to urgent situations. High levels of workload pressure can lead to fatigue, burnout, and a sense of being overwhelmed, which may negatively impact job satisfaction. This was also presented in the study of Flaubert (2021), that the consequences of burnout can include poor patient outcomes, high turnover rates, increased costs, and clinician illness and suicide. Additionally, in the area of dealing with patients and their relatives, nurses frequently interact not only with patients but also with their families. Communication challenges, emotional situations, and differing expectations can contribute to stress. Kerr et al. (2020) emphasize that interacting with patients and their families can be challenging, as nurses must be both empathetic and transparent when explaining diagnoses and treatments, which can be a demanding task. Communication problems and personality clashes are inevitable and can lead to stress and frustration.

On the other hand, the data provide evidence of a significant and positive direct relationship between nurses' stress and their confidence and competence, and their job satisfaction ($p = 0.002$; $r = 0.165$). This means that nurses who experience stress related to their confidence and competence in their work tend to manifest higher levels of job satisfaction. The reason why nurses tend to manifest higher levels of job satisfaction when experiencing stress related to their confidence and competence is that they are working outside their comfort zone. Working outside one's comfort zone often involves facing challenges that require nurses to stretch their skills and knowledge. Despite the stress associated with this, many nurses find satisfaction in the opportunity for professional growth and development. Overcoming challenges enhances their competence and builds confidence, leading to a sense of accomplishment and job satisfaction. A study conducted by Kiknadze and Leary (2021) shows that working outside one's comfort zone is related to the motives for engaging in a behavior and how individuals expect to feel if they perform it. Therefore, working outside one's comfort zone involves psychological mechanisms that influence people's decisions about whether performing anxiety-provoking behaviors is worth the potential benefits.

3.5 Relationship between Occupational Stress and Level of Job Performance of Nurses

Table 14 presents the data on the relationship between occupational stress and the level of job performance among nurses. It reveals that workload pressures ($p < .001$; $r_s = 0.228$) and dealing with patients and relatives ($p = 0.004$; $r_s = 0.151$) are significantly and positively related to the level of job performance among nurses. This finding suggests that nurses who experience stress in the mentioned areas tend to display better performance levels. Regarding Table 4, dealing with patients and their families can be particularly challenging, as it often involves handling communication and personality issues. However, that factor can also contribute to an increase in the performance of nurses, as they need to possess empathy and patience at all times. This relates to nurses' emotional intelligence, as concluded in Ariga's (2020) study, which stated that nurses with high emotional intelligence and a good workplace culture would exhibit good performance in providing professional nursing care to patients.

Table 14. Relationship between Occupational Stress and Level of Job Performance of Nurses (n=358)

Stress Variables Correlated to Overall Job Performance	r_s	P-value	Remark	Significant
Workload Pressures	0.228	<.001	Reject H_{02}	Significant
Dealing with Patients and Relatives	0.151	0.004	Reject H_{02}	Significant
Confidence & Competence in the Role	-0.120	0.024	Reject H_{02}	Significant

Level of significance = 0.05

Additionally, the table indicates a significant relationship between their confidence and competence. This implies that when nurses experience high levels of stress related to their occupation, it tends to impact how well they perform their jobs, specifically affecting their confidence in their abilities and their overall competence in fulfilling their responsibilities.

3.6 Relationship between Level of Job Satisfaction and Job Performance of Nurses

Table 15 reveals the data in identifying the relationship between the level of job satisfaction and the job performance of nurses. The results indicate that the overall satisfaction of nurses is positively and directly related to their performance in leadership ($p < .001$; $r = 0.551$). This suggests that nurses who exhibit better leadership performance tend to have a higher level of job satisfaction. Thus, strong leadership involves clear communication of expectations, goals, and feedback. When nurses have a clear understanding of their roles and expectations, it reduces ambiguity and confusion, leading to increased job satisfaction and overall well-being. Effective communication also enables nurses to feel heard and valued, contributing to a positive work experience. Albagawi (2019) agrees that the positive correlation between nurses' job satisfaction and their performance in terms of leadership can be attributed to the creation of a supportive and empowering work environment, clear communication, recognition, opportunities for professional growth, and effective conflict resolution. These factors collectively contribute to a positive and fulfilling work experience for nurses.

Table 15. *Relationship between Occupational Stress and Level of Job Performance of Nurses (n=358)*

Overall Job Satisfaction and Nurses' Performance in terms of	r_s	P-value	Remark	Significant
Leadership	0.551	<.001	Reject H_{03}	Significant
Planning and Evaluation	-0.136	0.010	Reject H_{03}	Significant
Teaching and Collaboration	-0.310	<.001	Reject H_{03}	Significant
Interpersonal Relations & Comm.	-0.468	<.001	Reject H_{03}	Significant
Professional Development	-0.027	0.618	Fail to reject H_{03}	Not significant

Level of significance = 0.05

Meanwhile, a significant and inverse relationship is apparent between the overall satisfaction of the nurses and their performance in terms of planning and evaluation ($p = 0.010$; $r_s = -0.136$), teaching and collaboration ($p = <.001$; $r_s = -0.310$), and interpersonal relations and communication ($p = <.001$; $r_s = -0.468$). These findings imply that nurses who perform in the enumerated areas tend to have lower levels of job satisfaction. In summary, an inverse relationship between nurses' job satisfaction and their performance in planning and evaluation, as well as interpersonal relations and communication, suggests that deficiencies in these areas can contribute to job stress, burnout, lack of clarity, teamwork issues, patient safety concerns, professional frustration, and challenges in work-life balance. The study of Shina (2022) supports the current finding, and addressing these aspects through improved planning, effective communication, and supportive interpersonal relations can contribute to a more positive work environment and increased job satisfaction among nurses.

3.7 Relationship between the Profile of the Nurses and their Level of Occupational Stress, Job Satisfaction, and Job Performance

Table 16 presents the data on identifying the relationship between the profile of nurses and their levels of occupational stress, job satisfaction, and job performance. It reveals that only the civil status of the nurses is associated with their overall occupational stress ($p = 0.004 < \alpha = 0.05$), wherein married nurses (Median = 3.67) display a lower level of stress than single nurses (Median = 3.80). This result can be influenced when respondents have social support. Marriage often provides a built-in support system, as spouses can offer emotional, practical, and social support to one another. Having a partner to share concerns, discuss work-related challenges, and provide overall support can contribute to a lower perception of stress. Single nurses may lack this immediate support system, which can potentially increase their stress levels.

The same finding is also affirmed by Cañadas et al. (2018), who note that marriage can be associated with emotional stability and a sense of companionship. The emotional connection with a spouse may act as a buffer against the stressors associated with the nursing profession. Single nurses may experience a higher degree of emotional strain due to the absence of a marital support system. Additionally, married nurses may benefit from a more established work-life balance, as responsibilities and support at home are shared with a spouse. Being part of a marital relationship often involves social engagements with a partner, family, and friends. Social support networks can play a significant role in reducing stress. Single nurses may need to actively seek out social support, which may not be as readily available as the built-in support within a marital relationship (Baptista et al., 2021).

The table also presents a significant relationship between the nurses' assigned area and their level of job satisfaction ($p = 0.040$; $p < \alpha = 0.05$). The post hoc analysis presents that (a) nurses assigned to the infirmary have a higher level of satisfaction than those assigned to the allied health profession department and medical service. Workload and stress levels can vary significantly in different areas of a healthcare facility. Nurses in the infirmary may perceive their workload as manageable, leading to lower stress levels and higher job satisfaction. The study

of Hellin et al. (2022) supports the current finding. In contrast, those in other departments or services may experience higher stress levels due to different demands.

Table 16. Relationship between Variables (n = 358)

Variables	x ²	p-value	Decision	Remark
Overall Occupational Stress and...				
Sex	1.556	0.212	Fail to reject H ₀₄	Not significant
Civil Status	8.237	0.004	Reject H ₀₄	Significant
Civil Status	Level of Occupational Stress			
Single:	Median = 3.80			
Married:	Median = 3.67			
Area Assigned	3.930	0.269	Fail to reject H ₀₄	Not significant
Overall Level of Job Satisfaction and...				
Sex	2.458	0.117	Fail to reject H ₀₄	Not significant
Civil Status	2.052	0.152	Fail to reject H ₀₄	Not significant
Area Assigned	8.299	0.040	Reject H ₀₃	Significant
	Assigned Area		Level of Job Satisfaction	
	Infirmery:		Median = 3.98	
	Medical Service:		Median = 3.80	
	Allied Health Prof. Dept:		Median = 3.86	
	Records:		Median = 3.90	
	Post Hoc Analysis			
	Infirmery vs. Allied Health Prof Dept: p = 0.006 (significant)			
	Infirmery and Medical Service: p = <.001 (significant)			
Overall Level of Job Performance and...				
Sex	3.511	0.061	Fail to reject H ₀₄	Not significant
Civil Status	0.555	0.456	Fail to reject H ₀₄	Not significant
Area Assigned	5.528	0.137	Fail to reject H ₀₄	Not significant
Variables	r _s	p-value	Decision	Remark
Overall Occupational Stress and...				
Age	0.032	0.552	Fail to reject H ₀₄	Not significant
Years in Current Hosp.	0.104	0.049	Reject H ₀₃	Significant
Overall Level of Job Satisfaction and...				
Age	0.089	0.094	Fail to reject H ₀₄	Not significant
Years in Current Hosp.	0.070	0.190	Fail to reject H ₀₄	Not significant
Overall Level of Job Performance and...				
Age	-0.181	<.001	Reject H ₀₃	Significant
Years in Current Hosp.	-0.189	<.001	Reject H ₀₃	Significant
Level of significance = 0.05				

Level of significance = 0.05

The Table further indicates that the number of work years in the current hospital of the nurses is significantly and directly related to their overall occupational stress ($p = 0.049$; $r_s = 0.104$). This suggests that the longer nurses work, the greater their overall occupational stress. Nurses with more years of experience may have seen an increase in workload and responsibilities over time. As they gain seniority, they may assume additional roles, leadership responsibilities, or more demanding assignments, which can contribute to higher levels of stress. As emphasized by Labrague & Pettite (2018), nurses with longer tenures may face difficulties in maintaining a healthy work-life balance. Over time, the demands of the job may affect personal life, leading to stressors related to time management and the ability to recharge outside of work.

On the other hand, the number of work years in the current hospital is significantly and indirectly related to nurses' overall job performance ($p < .001$; $r_s = -0.189$). This implies that the nurses who stay longer in the current hospital tend to have lower overall job performance. This finding suggests that longer tenure in a particular hospital may lead to a sense of complacency or reduced motivation among some nurses. Over time, individuals may become accustomed to the routine and may no longer feel as challenged or motivated to excel in their roles, potentially affecting their overall job performance. In a related study by Hopson, Petri, and Kufera (2018), they affirm that younger nurses entering the workforce may bring new perspectives, skills, and approaches to patient care. If there are generational differences in the workplace, it could lead to tensions or challenges in adapting to varying work styles, potentially affecting overall job performance.

In summary, the analysis reveals a significant positive correlation between clients' awareness of the SEnA program and their level of satisfaction, highlighting the importance of effective communication and access to information in enhancing client satisfaction.

4.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings from this study shed light on the extensive occupational stress experienced by nurses in selected government hospitals in Negros Oriental. Nurses face high levels of stress across various dimensions, including workload pressures, interactions with patients and their relatives, and confidence in their roles. Under-staffed nurses may have caused a high level of stress, which compelled them to take on all responsibilities even beyond their competence and capability, as noted in the nurse-patient ratio of 1:17, along with other documentary evidence. Despite experiencing significant stress, they exhibit high levels of job satisfaction, particularly in areas such as pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, rewards, and the nature of their work. Interestingly, while stress negatively impacts job satisfaction, it has a positive correlation with job performance, particularly in handling workload pressures and patient interactions, which underscores the resilience and adaptability of nurses in challenging environments. When faced with high levels of stress, individuals often experience heightened alertness and focus as part of the body's natural fight-or-flight response. In the context of nursing, this can translate into increased attentiveness to patient needs and a more effective ability to prioritize tasks. Despite the workload pressure they are getting, nurses often become adept at managing their time effectively to meet the demands of their workload. This can lead to increased productivity and the ability to accomplish tasks promptly, even in the face of external pressures. Additionally, the study identifies demographic factors such as civil status and assigned areas that influence stress levels and job satisfaction among nurses. These insights highlight the intricate relationship between occupational stress, job satisfaction, and job performance, underscoring the need for targeted interventions and support systems to promote the well-being and effectiveness of nursing professionals. Over time, exposure to stress can help build resilience, allowing nurses to adapt more effectively to challenging circumstances. This resilience can be invaluable in maintaining job performance and professional satisfaction in the face of adversity.

5.0 Contribution of Authors

This study was reviewed and approved by the single author and her adviser, who also approved the final version of this paper.

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7.0 Conflict of Interest

This research has no conflict of interest of any sort as far as this study is concerned.

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