

Relationship between Actual Working Hours and Patient Load in a Selected Tertiary Healthcare Facility in Gwagwalada, Abuja

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between actual working hours, patient load, and their influence on stress and job satisfaction among healthcare workers in the tertiary healthcare facility in Gwagwalada, Abuja. A total of 322 healthcare workers participated, comprising mostly nurses (53.7%) and doctors (37.3%). Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and analyzed with descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, and graphs) as well as inferential statistics (Chi-square and logistic regression) at a 0.05 level of significance. Findings showed that the majority of respondents worked long hours, with 39.1% reporting 41–50 hours per week and 31.1% working more than 50 hours. Over half (50.9%) attended to more than 15 patients per shift, while 94.7% perceived staff numbers as inadequate. Nearly all (98.8%) worked rotational shifts, and 87.3% reported an increase in workload in the past year. Stress levels were considerably high, with 90% of respondents experiencing emotional stress at least sometimes, and 33.5% experiencing it very often. About 49.1% had high stress levels, while 47.8% reported moderate job satisfaction. Chi-square analysis revealed a significant association between patient load and stress ($\chi^2 = 46.208$, $p = 0.001$), and between working hours and stress ($\chi^2 = 18.382$, $p = 0.001$). Logistic regression indicated that high patient load significantly reduced the odds of a manageable workload (OR = 0.163, $p = 0.001$), while increased workload markedly predicted higher stress and reduced job satisfaction (OR = 0.364, $p = 0.001$). The findings demonstrate that heavy workloads and extended working hours are major predictors of stress and declining job satisfaction among healthcare workers. The study recommends improved staff recruitment, workload redistribution, and institutional stress management programs to enhance job satisfaction and promote healthcare workers' well-being.

