

Assessment of psychological well-being and emotional intelligence among nursing students in selected Nursing college.

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ABSTRACT

Background: Academic performance is a key indicator of professional success among healthcare students. Nursing students often experience stress, examination anxiety, frustration, and motivational challenges, which may negatively affect their psychological well-being and emotional intelligence. These psychological factors play a crucial role in academic adjustment and professional competence, making their assessment essential.

Objectives: To assess the psychological well-being and emotional intelligence among nursing students. To compare psychological well-being and emotional intelligence among nursing students across different academic years.

Methodology: A descriptive research design was adopted for the study. The study was conducted among B.Sc. Nursing students of first, second, third, and fourth year, with 50% representation from each academic year, at a selected nursing college of MMDU, Mullana, Ambala, Haryana. Data were collected using a socio-demographic questionnaire and standardized tools for assessing psychological well-being and emotional intelligence. Inferential analysis was carried out using the t-test.

Results: Comparison of psychological well-being between first-year and second-year nursing students showed a mean difference of 1.20 with a t value of 0.680 and a p value of 0.27, indicating no statistically significant difference. A statistically significant difference was observed between first-year and third-year students (mean difference = 6.579, t = 2.617, p = 0.006). The comparison between first-year and fourth-year students revealed a mean difference of 1.72 (t = 0.420, p = 0.675). Comparison between second-year and third-year students showed a mean difference of 9.54 (t = 0.648, p = 0.518), while comparison between second-year and fourth-year students revealed a mean difference of 6.94 (t = 1.671, p = 0.097). The comparison between third-year and fourth-year students showed a mean difference of 2.23 (t = -0.458, p = 0.648). With regard to emotional intelligence, the comparison between first-year and second-year nursing students showed a mean difference of 6.63 with a t value of 2.969 and a p value of 0.005, indicating statistical significance. The comparison between first-year and third-year students showed a mean difference of 6.29 (t = 2.483, p = 0.034). A highly significant difference was found between first-year and fourth-year students with a mean difference of 14.74 (t = 4.788, p = 0.001). Comparison between second-year and third-year students showed a mean difference of 0.34 (t = -0.095, p = 0.924), indicating no significant difference. The comparison between second-year and fourth-year students revealed a mean difference of 19.29 (t = 5.053, p < 0.001). The comparison between third-year and fourth-year students showed a mean difference of 2.23 (t = -0.458, p = 0.648).

The findings indicate significant differences in emotional intelligence and selective differences in psychological well-being among nursing students across academic years, highlighting the importance of early psychological and emotional support interventions within nursing education programs..

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Psychological wellbeing, nursing Students..

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INTRODUCTION

Globally, Psychological well-being is a multidimensional construct that encompasses the totality of psychological factors influencing an individual's quality of life and overall functioning. It reflects not merely the absence of

psychological distress, but the presence of positive psychological states that enable individuals to realize their potential, cope effectively with stressors, and function productively in their personal and professional lives. Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS), widely recognized in psychological and health research,

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conceptualizes well-being through six core dimensions: self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth. In the present study, a modified version of Ryff's PWBS, adapted for cultural relevance by Kim, Kim, and Cha, was employed to ensure contextual appropriateness and validity¹.

Self-acceptance refers to a positive evaluation of oneself and one's past life, while positive relationships emphasize the ability to form warm, trusting, and meaningful interpersonal connections. Autonomy reflects independence and self-determination in thought and action, whereas purpose in life denotes having meaningful goals and a sense of direction. Personal growth highlights the continuous development of one's capacities and openness to new experiences². Together, these dimensions provide a comprehensive framework for understanding psychological well-being, particularly among students navigating demanding academic and professional training such as nursing education. Emotional intelligence, on the other hand, is defined as the ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and express emotions effectively in oneself and others. It involves sensitivity to emotional states, accurate emotional appraisal, and the capacity to manage emotions in diverse social and professional contexts. Emotional intelligence extends beyond cognitive intelligence, emphasizing emotional awareness and adaptive emotional regulation as key contributors to successful functioning. According to emotional intelligence theory, these emotional competencies play a critical role in personal development, interpersonal relationships, decision-making, and mental health³.

The interrelationship between psychological well-being and emotional intelligence is increasingly recognized as vital in nursing education. Students with higher emotional intelligence are better equipped to regulate emotions, maintain positive interpersonal relationships, and find purpose and meaning in their professional roles, all of which contribute to enhanced psychological well-being. Conversely, poor emotional regulation and low emotional intelligence may predispose students to psychological distress, anxiety, and diminished academic engagement⁴.

NEED OF THE STUDY

Nursing education is academically rigorous and emotionally demanding, requiring sustained emotional involvement with patients, families, peers, and healthcare teams. Nursing students are frequently exposed to emotionally charge clinical situations high academic expectations, time constraints, and performance pressures. As highlighted in the literature, these stressors place nursing students at a heightened risk of psychological strain (Chun & Park, 2016). Consequently, students enrolled in baccalaureate nursing programs often report moderate to high levels of stress, which may adversely affect their psychological well-being, emotional regulation, and academic performance. The ability to cope effectively with these stressors requires strong psychological resilience and emotional intelligence. Psychological well-being plays a crucial role in enabling nursing students to manage stress, maintain motivation, and sustain a positive sense of self

during challenging academic and clinical experiences. Similarly, emotional intelligence equips students with the capacity to recognize, understand, and regulate emotions, thereby fostering effective interpersonal relationships, empathy, and professional competence. Deficiencies in these domains may lead to emotional exhaustion, anxiety, burnout, and diminished academic engagement

In this context, the present study is essential to assess the psychological well-being and emotional intelligence of nursing students and to explore differences across academic years. The findings of this study may provide valuable insights for nursing educators, administrators, and policymakers to design supportive academic environments, counseling services, and emotional intelligence-enhancing interventions. Such initiatives are vital for promoting mental health, academic success, and the development of competent, emotionally resilient nursing professionals⁷.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Heidari, Shahbazi, Heidari, Rezaei, and Jani (2018) conducted an experimental interventional study to examine the impact of teaching problem-solving techniques on the emotional intelligence of nursing students. The study aimed to assess the effectiveness of structured problem-solving instruction in enhancing emotional intelligence among undergraduate nursing students. The research was carried out at the Hazrat Fatemeh School of Nursing and Midwifery, Shiraz University of Medical Sciences, Iran, and was published in the Journal of Education and Health Promotion (DOI: 10.4103/jehp.jehp_50_18). A pretest–posttest case-control design was employed for the study. The sample consisted of 43 senior nursing students enrolled in the seventh semester of their undergraduate nursing program. Participants were randomly assigned to an intervention group (n = 20) and a control group (n = 23). The intervention group received structured training in problem-solving techniques, while the control group did not receive any such intervention. Data were collected using the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i), a standardized tool for measuring emotional intelligence, and were analyzed using SPSS software version 16.

RESEARCH APPROACH

For the present study, a **quantitative research approach** was adopted to systematically assess and quantify the levels of psychological well-being and emotional intelligence among nursing students. The quantitative approach was considered appropriate as it allows for objective measurement, statistical analysis, and comparison of variables across different groups, thereby facilitating accurate interpretation of findings. A **descriptive research design** was employed to describe the existing levels of psychological well-being and emotional intelligence among nursing students and to examine variations across different academic years. Descriptive research design is suitable for studies aimed at identifying characteristics, conditions, or relationships within a population without manipulating variables⁹.

The study was conducted at **M.M. College of Nursing, Mullana, Ambala, Haryana**, which provides undergraduate

nursing education and clinical training. The **target population** for the study comprised all undergraduate nursing students enrolled in the B.Sc. Nursing program at M.M. College of Nursing. A **convenience sampling technique** was used to select participants from the target population, based on their availability and willingness to participate in the study. The total sample size consisted of **300 nursing students**, including students from **first year, second year, third year, and fourth year B.Sc. Nursing programs**, ensuring adequate representation from each academic year.

DATA COLLECTION TOOL AND TECHNIQUE

Data collection is one of the most crucial aspects of any research study, as the quality of data directly influences the accuracy, validity, and reliability of the study findings. In quantitative research, a well-planned data collection strategy is essential to obtain precise, meaningful, and scientifically sound data. Considerable time and effort were invested in selecting appropriate tools to ensure that the data collected effectively addressed the objectives of the present study.

Description of the Tool

The data for the present study were collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of three tools:

Tool 1: Self-Structured Socio-Demographic Variables

A self-structured socio-demographic data sheet was developed by the investigator to collect background information of the participants. This tool consisted of seven items, including age, gender, and religion, and marital status, family income of parents (classified according to B.G. Prasad's socioeconomic scale), place of residence (urban/rural), and year of study. The socio-demographic information was used to describe the sample characteristics and to examine the association of selected variables with psychological well-being and emotional intelligence.

Tool 2: Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale

Psychological well-being was assessed using Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale, which consists of 42 items. The scale measures multiple dimensions of psychological well-being, including self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth. Each item is rated on a six-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Higher scores indicate a higher level of psychological well-being among the participants.

Tool 3: Schulte Emotional Intelligence Scale

Emotional intelligence was measured using the Schulte Emotional Intelligence Scale, a standardized self-report questionnaire designed to assess emotional intelligence. The scale comprises 33 items, each reflecting various aspects of emotional perception, understanding, regulation, and utilization. Responses are rated on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Higher scores on the scale indicate a higher level of emotional intelligence.

VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

To ensure the accuracy and scientific rigor of the study, both validity and reliability of the data collection tools were established prior to data collection. Standardized instruments were used to measure psychological well-being

and emotional intelligence, ensuring content relevance and consistency. Content validity of the tools was established by submitting the instruments to nine experts from the field of nursing and allied disciplines. The panel of experts included one expert from the Obstetrics and Gynecology Department, one from the Nursing Foundation Department, two from the Mental Health Nursing Department, four from the Community Health Nursing Department, and one additional expert from the Mental Health Nursing specialty. The experts evaluated the tools for relevance, clarity, adequacy, and appropriateness of the items. Based on their suggestions and recommendations, necessary modifications were incorporated into the final tools. The accepted validity coefficient for standardized tools such as Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale and the Schulte Emotional Intelligence Scale ranges between 0.7 and 1.0, indicating good to excellent validity.

Reliability of the Tools

The reliability of the psychological well-being and emotional intelligence tools was established using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which measures internal consistency. The obtained reliability coefficients were found to be within the acceptable range, indicating that the tools were reliable for assessing psychological well-being and emotional intelligence among nursing students.

Pilot Study

Prior to the main study, a pilot study was conducted to assess the feasibility and practicability of the research. Administrative permission for the pilot study was obtained from the Principal of M.M. Institute of Nursing, Mullana, Ambala, Haryana. The pilot study was carried out in November 2024 on a sample of 30 nursing students selected from M.M. College of Nursing, Mullana, Ambala, and Haryana. These students shared characteristics similar to those of the target population. Each participant required approximately 30 minutes to complete the questionnaire. The analysis of the pilot study was conducted in accordance with the objectives of the study. No major difficulties were encountered during the pilot study, and the findings indicated that the tools were clear, appropriate, practicable, and unambiguous. The pilot study confirmed the feasibility of conducting the main study and helped finalize the data collection plan.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval to conduct the study was obtained from the Principal of M.M. College of Nursing, Mullana, Ambala, Haryana, and ethical permission was also granted by the Ethical Committee of Maharishi Markandeshwar (Deemed to be University), Mullana, Ambala. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection, and confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents were strictly maintained throughout the study.

Procedure for final data collection

Formal permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Principal of M.M. College of Nursing, Mullana, Ambala, Haryana. The final data collection was carried out in the month of November 2024. Prior to data collection,

the investigator introduced herself/himself to the B.Sc. Nursing students and established rapport with them. The nursing students were informed that their participation in the study was voluntary, and they were assured that the information provided by them would be kept strictly confidential and used only for research purposes. A convenience sampling technique was employed to collect data from the B.Sc. Nursing students of M.M. College of Nursing, Mullana, Ambala, and Haryana. After obtaining informed consent, the data collection tools were administered to the participants, and sufficient time was provided to complete the questionnaire.

Plan for data analysis

The data obtained from the nursing students were analyzed in accordance with the objectives of the study. Both descriptive and inferential statistical methods were planned and employed for data analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize and describe the sample characteristics and study variables. These included frequency and percentage distribution, mean, median, and standard deviation. Inferential statistics were applied to determine differences and associations among variables. The t-test was used to compare mean scores of psychological well-being and emotional intelligence across different academic

years, while the Chi-square test was used to examine the association between selected socio-demographic variables and psychological well-being and emotional intelligence. The data were initially tabulated using Microsoft Excel and subsequently analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0. The level of statistical significance was set at $p = 0.05$. The analysis and interpretation of the data were carried out systematically and were guided by the stated objectives of the study.

Organization of data findings

The data findings of the study have been systematically organized and presented under the following sections:
 Section I: Description of socio-demographic variables of nursing students.
 Section II: Assessment of psychological well-being and emotional intelligence of nursing students.
 Section III: Association of psychological well-being and emotional intelligence of nursing students with selected socio-demographic variables.
 Section IV: Range, mean, and standard deviation of psychological well-being and emotional intelligence of nursing students.
 Section V: Correlation between psychological well-being and emotional intelligence of nursing students.

Table No. 1 Frequency and Percentage distribution of nursing students in terms of demographic variables (N= 300)

SR NO	VARIABLE	1st year F [%]	2nd year F [%]	3rd year F [%]	4th year F [%]
1	AGE				
	15-20	98[81.67%]	35[53.85%]	15[23.08%]	08[16%]
	21-25	22[18.33%]	30[46.15%]	50[76.92%]	41[82%]
	26-30	00[00%]	00[00%]	00[00%]	01[02%]
	>30	00[00%]	00[00%]	00[00%]	00[00%]
2	GENDER				
	Male Female	42[35%] 78[65%]	24[36.92%] 41[63.08%]	35[53.85%] 30[46.15%]	19[38%] 31[62%]
3	RELIGION				
	Hindu	101[84.17%]	44[67.89%]	39[60%]	37[74%]
	Muslim	09[7.5%]	04[6.15%]	03[4.62%]	03[06%]
	Sikh	03[2.5%]	04[6.15%]	09[13.85%]	00[00%]
	Christian Others	01[0.83%] 04[0.5%]	02[3.08%] 11[16.92%]	02[3.08%] 12[18.46%]	02[04%] 08[16%]
4	MARITAL STATUS				
	Married Unmarried	05[4.17%] 115[95.83%]	02[3.08%] 63[96.92%]	04[6.15%] 61[93.85%]	01[02%] 49[98%]
5	FAMILY INCOME				
	Upper class				
	Upper middle class	33[27.5%]	16[24.62%]	19[31.34%]	17[34%]
	Middle class	38[31.67%]	16[24.62%]	11[16.42%]	10[20%]
	Lower middle Lower class	43[35.83%] 05[4.17%] 01[0.83%]	29[44.62%] 02[3.08%] 02[3.08%]	29[43.28%] 05[07.46%] 01[1.49%]	19[38%] 03[03%] 01[02%]
6	RESIDENCE				
	Hostel Paying guest	42[35%] 19[15.83%]	28[43.08%] 14[21.54%]	29[44.62%] 13[20%]	10[20%] 21[42%]

	Home	56[46.67%]	22[33.85%]	22[33.85%]	19[38%]
	Others	03[2.5%]	01[1.54%]	01[1.54%]	00[00%]

Table 1 shows the distribution of nursing students according to selected socio-demographic variables across all academic years. The findings indicate that the majority of first-year students (81%) belong to the age group of 15–20 years. Across all four years, the majority of third-year students (65%, n = 78) are female. Regarding religion, most first-year students (84.17%) are Hindu. In terms of marital status, the majority of first-year students (95.83%) are unmarried. With respect to family income, most second-year students (44.62%) belong to the lower-middle-class category, based on B.G. Prasad’s classification. Finally, considering place of residence, the majority of first-year students (46.67%) reside at home.

Assessment of level of psychological and emotional intelligence

This section presents the findings related to the assessment of psychological well-being and emotional intelligence among nursing students. The scores obtained using Ryff’s Psychological Well-Being Scale and the Schulte Emotional Intelligence Scale have been systematically analyzed and are presented in the form of tables for clarity and ease of interpretation.

Table no. 2 Frequency and percentage of psychological well-being and emotional intelligence of nursing students (N= 300)

Table 2 presents the distribution of nursing students according to their levels of psychological well-being and emotional intelligence across all academic years. The findings indicate that the majority of first-year students (n = 112, 93.3%) have moderate psychological well-being. In

TOOL	1 ST YEAR F [%] N=120	2 ND YEAR F [%] N=65	3 RD YEAR F [%] N=65	4 TH YEAR F [%] N=50
PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING LOW [42-117] MODERATE [118-210] HIGH [211-294]	08[6.7%] 112[93.3%] 00[00%]	10[15.38%] 55[84.61%] 00[00%]	12[18.46%] 53[81.53%] 00[00%]	06[12%] 44[88%] 00[00%]
EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE LOW [<111] MODERATE [112-136] HIGH [>137]	60[50%] 60[50%] 00[00%]	45[69.23%] 17[26.15%] 03[4.61%]	39[60%] 24[36.96%] 01[02%]	37[74%] 12[24%] 03

contrast, the majority of fourth-year students (n = 37, 74%) demonstrate low emotional intelligence compared to students from other academic years.

Frequency and percentage of psychological well-being and emotional intelligence of nursing students

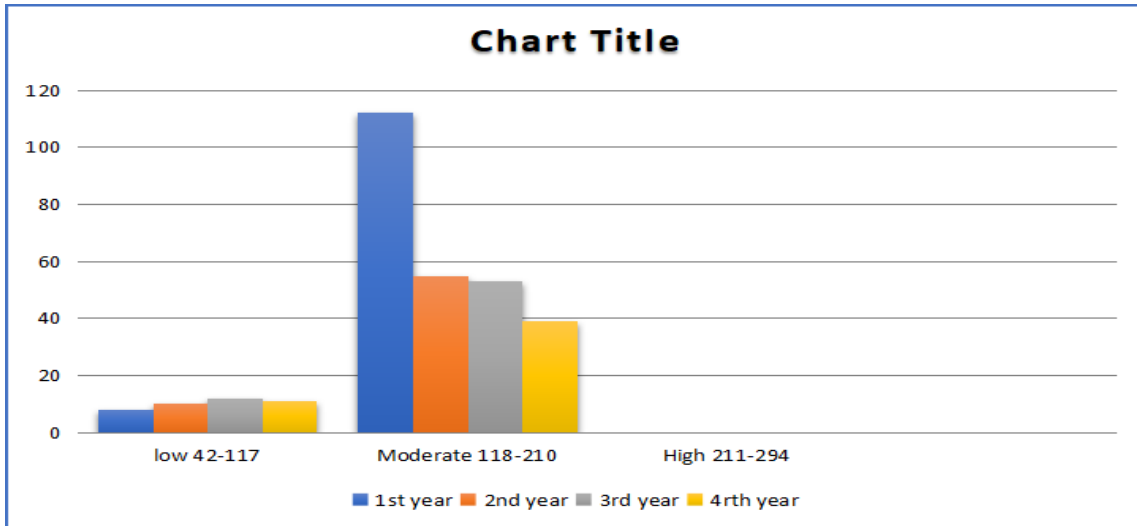


Figure 2 presents a bar graph showing the distribution of nursing students according to their psychological well-being scores across all academic years. Among first-year students, the majority (n = 112) have moderate psychological well-being, while a minority (n = 8) have low scores. In the second year, most students (n = 55) have moderate psychological well-being, with a smaller number (n = 10) scoring low. Among third-year students, the majority (n = 53) score moderate, and a minority (n = 12) score low. In the fourth year, most students (n = 39) have moderate psychological well-being, whereas 11 students fall in the low category.

Table no. 3 Range mean and standard deviation mean difference (N= 300)

Tool	B.Sc. nursing	Range	MEAN+SD	Median
PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING	1] 1 st year [120]	81	132.0+13.37	132.0
	2] 2 nd year [65]	92	124.20+16.061	125.0
	3] 3 rd year [65]	107	125.95+20.17	127.0
	4] 4 th year [50]	127	117.26+28.06	126.0
EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE	1] 1 st Year (120)	63	109.32+12.615	111.50
	2] 2 nd year (65)	92	102.69+18.619	100.0
	3] 3 rd year (65)	109	103.03+21.832	107.00
	4] 4 th year (50)	124	94.58+27.567	99.00

P significant =0.05

P not significant=>0.05

Table no. 4 This table show the comparison between nursing students of each class with their others class by using t-test comparison of psychological well-being and emotional intelligence of nursing students. N=300

Tool	GROUP	MEAN+SD	MD	T VALE	P VALE
PSYCHOLOCAL WELLBEING	1)1 ST YEAR V/S 2 ND YEAR	142.48+17.394	1.2	0.680	.027
	2)1 ST YEAR V/S 3 RD YEAR	141.28+21.51	6.579	2.617	0.006
	3)2 ND YEAR V/S 3 RD YEAR	132+13.377	9.54	0.648	0.518
	4)3 RD YEAR V/S 4 TH YEAR	125.95+20.715	2.02	-0.365	0.716
	5)4 TH YEAR V/S 1 ST YEAR	148.28+21.515	1.72	0.420	0.675
	6)2 ND YEAR V/S 4 TH YEAR	138.74+23.092	6.94	1.671	0.097

		124.20+16.061 117.26+88.046			
EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENE	1]1 ST YEAR V/S 2 ND YEAR	109.32±12.615 102.69 18.619	6.63	2.869	0.005
	2]1 ST YEAR V/S 3 RD YEAR	109.32+12.615 103.03+21.832	6.29	2.483	0.014
	3]2 ND YEAR V/S 3 RD YEAR	102.69± 18.619 103.03± 21.83	0.34	-0.095	0.924
	4]3 RD YEAR V/S 4 TH YEAR	95.29± 24.288	2.23	-0.458	-0648
	5] 4 TH YEAR V/S 1 ST YEAR	97.52±27.764 94.58±27.567 109.32±12.615 102.69+18.619 121.98+22.289	14.7 19.2	4.788 5.053	0.001 0.00

Table no. 5 Correlation between psychological well-being and emotional intelligence

This section describes the co-relationship between psychological well-being and emotional intelligence of nursing students

	Correlation	Emotional intelligence
1	Psychological wellbeing	R value=0.002
		(P value=0.000 ^{xxxx})

The findings presented in Table 5 indicate that the correlation between psychological well-being and emotional intelligence among nursing students is 0.002, demonstrating a positive relationship between the two variables. This correlation was found to be statistically highly significant at the 0.05 level of significance (p = 0.000).

MAJOR FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The majority of first-year students (81%) belong to the age group of 15–20 years. Among all four academic years, the majority of third-year students (65%, n = 78) are female. Regarding religion, most first-year students (84.17%) are Hindu, and in terms of marital status, the majority of first-year students (95.83%) are unmarried. With respect to family income, the majority of second-year students (44.62%) belong to the lower-middle-class category. Considering place of residence, most first-year students (46.67%) reside at home. In terms of psychological well-being, the majority of first-year students (n = 112, 93.3%)

scored at a moderate level. Regarding emotional intelligence, the majority of fourth-year students (n = 37, 74%) scored at a low level compared to students of other years. The study was conducted among B.Sc. Nursing students of M.M. College of Nursing, Ambala, and Haryana, which limits the generalizability of the findings to other geographical areas or populations. Data were collected from a total of 300 students. Future studies could include a larger sample size to allow for broader generalization of the results.

The present study assessed psychological well-being and emotional intelligence among B.Sc. Nursing students across four academic years. The findings revealed that the majority of students in all academic years demonstrated a moderate level of psychological well-being. This suggests that while students are able to cope reasonably well with academic and clinical demands, they may still experience stressors that prevent optimal psychological functioning. The absence of high psychological well-being across all academic years indicates the need for institutional support mechanisms to enhance students’ mental health. Similar

findings have been reported in previous studies, which highlight moderate psychological well-being among nursing students due to academic workload and clinical stress.

Regarding emotional intelligence, the findings showed that a substantial proportion of fourth-year students exhibited low emotional intelligence compared to students in other academic years. This decline may be attributed to increased academic pressure, clinical responsibilities, and concerns about career placement and professional readiness during the final year. These findings are consistent with earlier studies suggesting that prolonged exposure to stress without adequate emotional support may negatively impact emotional intelligence. The correlation analysis demonstrated a positive and statistically significant relationship between psychological well-being and emotional intelligence, indicating that students with better psychological well-being tend to have higher emotional intelligence.

CONCLUSION

The present study concludes that the majority of nursing students exhibit moderate psychological well-being, while emotional intelligence levels tend to decline in the later years of nursing education. The significant positive relationship between psychological well-being and emotional intelligence underscores the importance of addressing both constructs simultaneously. Promoting psychological well-being and emotional intelligence among nursing students is essential for their academic success, professional development, and delivery of quality healthcare services.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE SCOPE

The present study has certain limitations that should be considered while interpreting the findings. The research was conducted in a single selected nursing college of Ambala, Haryana, which limits the generalizability of the results to nursing students from other institutions, regions, or states. Additionally, the study included only B.Sc.

Nursing students, thereby restricting the applicability of the findings to other nursing programs such as GNM, ANM, or Post Basic B.Sc. Nursing. The use of a descriptive research design confines the study to identifying associations and does not permit the establishment of causal relationships between psychological well-being and emotional intelligence

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