



PERCEIVED SOCIAL SUPPORT AS A PREDICTOR OF RESILIENCE AMONG NURSES WITH COVID-19 CARE EXPERIENCE: A POST-PANDEMIC STUDY

Medical Surgical Nursing

**Regupriya
Madhavan***

Ph.D. Scholar, Nursing Officer, ESIC Model Hospital, Bengaluru. *Corresponding Author

**Dr. Bala
seethraman**

Former Nursing Superintendent and Professor in Medical surgical nursing, CMC Vellore.

ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic placed an extraordinary burden on nurses, exposing them to prolonged stress and emotional challenges. This study aimed to assess perceived social support as a predictor of resilience among nurses who had experience in caring for COVID-19 patients in the post-pandemic period. A descriptive correlational research design was adopted among 370 nurses selected using total enumerative sampling. Standardized tools, namely the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support and the Connor–Davidson Resilience Scale, were used for data collection. The findings revealed that the majority of nurses had moderate levels of perceived social support (57.30%) and resilience (57.84%). A statistically significant positive correlation was observed between perceived social support and resilience ($r = 0.62$, $p = 0.001$). The results indicate that nurses who perceived higher levels of support demonstrated better adaptive capacity and coping strength. Strengthening interpersonal and organizational support systems is essential for promoting resilience among nurses in the post-pandemic period.

KEYWORDS

Perceived Social Support, Resilience, Nurses, COVID-19, post-pandemic

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed nurses to prolonged stress, high workload, and risk of infection, leading to long-term psychological consequences. Even in the post-pandemic period, nurses continue to experience emotional strain and occupational challenges. Studies have reported that healthcare workers faced increased stress, anxiety, and burnout during and after the pandemic¹.

Resilience is an essential factor that enables nurses to adapt and recover from stressful experiences. It plays a key role in maintaining emotional stability and professional functioning. However, resilience is influenced by several external and internal factors, among which perceived social support is considered one of the most important².

Perceived social support refers to the emotional, informational, and practical assistance received from family, friends, and colleagues. Strong social support systems have been shown to reduce stress and enhance coping ability among healthcare workers³. Previous studies have demonstrated that nurses with higher social support exhibit better resilience and reduced burnout⁴.

Despite its importance, limited research has explored the predictive relationship between perceived social support and resilience among nurses in the post-pandemic period. Therefore, this study aims to assess perceived social support as a predictor of resilience among nurses with COVID-19 care experience.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

A quantitative descriptive correlational research design was adopted to assess the relationship between perceived social support and resilience among nurses who worked with COVID-19 patients.

The study was conducted in selected designated COVID care hospitals in Bengaluru after obtaining ethical clearance and institutional permission. A total of 370 nurses were selected using non-probability total enumerative sampling. Nurses who had direct experience in caring for COVID-19 patients and were willing to participate were included in the study.

Data were collected using standardized tools. Perceived social support was assessed using the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support, and resilience was measured using the Connor–Davidson Resilience Scale. Data collection was carried out through self-administered questionnaires.

Data were analysed using SPSS software. Descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage were used to describe the variables, and inferential statistics such as Karl Pearson correlation coefficient were used to determine the relationship between perceived social support and resilience. A p -value ≤ 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

RESULTS

The majority of nurses were aged between 31 and 40 years, and most had more than five years of experience in clinical practice. The majority of nurses, 212 (57.30%), had moderate perceived social support, followed by 110 (29.73%) with high support, and 48 (12.97%) with low support. A considerable proportion of participants reported moderate to high levels of perceived social support, as shown in Table 1.

Regarding resilience, most nurses 214 (57.84%) had moderate resilience, followed by 94 (25.40%) with high resilience and 62 (16.76%) with low resilience, as shown in Table 2. This indicates that although nurses have some capacity to cope with stress, there is scope for improvement.

The study revealed a significant positive correlation between perceived social support and resilience ($r = 0.62$, $p = 0.001$), as shown in Table 3. This indicates that as the level of perceived social support increases, resilience among nurses also improves.

Nurses who reported higher support from family, friends, and colleagues demonstrated better emotional stability, adaptability, and coping ability. In contrast, those with lower support levels showed reduced resilience and higher psychological distress.

TABLE 1. LEVEL OF PERCEIVED SOCIAL SUPPORT AMONG NURSES (N=370)

Level of Perceived Social Support	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Low Support (12–35)	48	12.97%
Moderate Support (36–60)	212	57.30%
High Support (61–84)	110	29.73%

TABLE 2. LEVEL OF RESILIENCE AMONG NURSES (N=370)

Level of Resilience	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Low (0–32)	62	16.76%
Moderate (33–66)	214	57.84%
High (67–100)	94	25.40%

TABLE 3. CORRELATION BETWEEN PERCEIVED SOCIAL SUPPORT AND RESILIENCE

Variables	Mean $\pm$ SD	Karl Pearson Correlation (r)	p-value	Interpretation
Perceived Social Support	52.34 $\pm$ 10.21	$r = 0.62$	$p = 0.001^*$	Significant positive correlation
Resilience	61.72 $\pm$ 12.45			

DISCUSSION

The present study identified a significant positive relationship between perceived social support and resilience among nurses with experience in COVID-19 care. This suggests that social support plays a key role in

enhancing the adaptive capacity of nurses in the post-pandemic period. Similar findings were reported by Labrague (2021), who emphasized that social support significantly improves resilience among healthcare workers by reducing stress and promoting positive coping strategies¹. In line with this, Xu et al. (2020) found that healthcare workers with higher perceived support reported better emotional stability and adaptability².

A study by Mehdizadeh et al. (2024) demonstrated that nurses who received strong family and peer support had significantly higher resilience scores, highlighting the importance of interpersonal relationships⁶. Likewise, Moisoglou et al. (2024) reported that social support acts as a protective factor against occupational stress and enhances resilience among nurses⁷.

Furthermore, Zhang et al. (2021) noted that social support contributes to improved coping mechanisms by providing emotional reassurance and reducing feelings of isolation among nurses⁸. Consistent with these findings, Hu et al. (2020) observed that nurses with better support systems experienced less stress and demonstrated stronger resilience during crisis situations⁹.

In addition, Rohani et al. (2025) emphasized that perceived social support significantly contributes to resilience by fostering a sense of security and emotional stability among nurses, thereby improving their ability to handle workplace challenges⁹. Furthermore, Yu et al. (2019) reported that both personal and work-related factors, including supportive work environments, play a vital role in enhancing resilience among nurses¹⁰.

The findings of the present study reinforce the need to strengthen support systems within healthcare organizations. Providing emotional support, peer interaction, and organizational backing can significantly improve resilience among nurses and help them cope effectively with ongoing challenges.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that perceived social support is a significant predictor of resilience among nurses who worked with COVID-19 patients. Enhancing social support systems at both personal and organizational levels can improve resilience and enable nurses to manage post-pandemic challenges more effectively.

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