

**ORIGINAL PAPER**

**The Experience of Anxiety in Nursing Staff in Public Hospitals of Peloponnese, Greece**

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**Abstract**

**Introduction:** The health sector is one of the most stressful workplaces. Several studies have showed that both nursing staff and nursing students experience different levels of stress. Greek and international literature have identified several stress factors governing the nursing profession: understaffed, exhaustive work, daily care of patients with specificities, interpersonal conflict and organizational obstacles encountered in public hospitals are stress factors that nurses often face.

**Aim:** The main aim of this paper was to investigate the state and trait anxiety that nurses face in public hospitals of Peloponnese.

**Materials and Methods:** The sample consisted of 395 nurses from hospitals of Argos, Kalamata, Korinthos, Molai, Pyrgos, Sparta and Tripoli. The research implementation lasted from August 2011 until June 2012. The participation of nurses was voluntary. A socio-demographic and occupational characteristics questionnaire was completed and the scale State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI) of Spielberger. The statistical analysis was based on statistical package IBM SPSS 20.

**Results:** Nurses showed statistically significant higher total and transient stress compared to the healthy population with women experiencing higher total and permanent anxiety than men. With regard to clinics, the findings showed that nurses of open segments reported higher permanent anxiety, while statistically significant was the headquarters of the hospital in the event of permanent anxiety. In addition, the educational level was a statistically significant factor of permanent and total anxiety, graduates of technological institutes (TEI) and those who did not have a graduate degree reported more idiosyncratic and total stress. In contrast no correlation was found between the three scales of anxiety and age, marital status, work experience, the number of patients per shift, satisfaction for the position and object of the work and the frequency of weekly exercise.

**Conclusion:** The nurses have higher levels of stress compared to the healthy population. The adoption of guidelines such as the design of interventions to promote mental health, training programs in anxiety management and support groups for nurses is essential and perhaps protective function for all nurses.

**Key words:** anxiety, nurses, hospital, Greece.