

Association Between Perceived Social Support and Mental Well-being Among Chinese Nursing Students: A Cross-sectional Study

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Abstract

Background: Nursing students are exposed to substantial academic and clinical stressors, which may adversely affect their mental well-being. Perceived social support has been widely recognized as an important psychosocial resource that contributes to positive mental health outcomes by buffering stress and enhancing coping capacity. Examining the relationship between perceived social support and mental well-being among nursing students may help inform supportive strategies within nursing education. **Objective:** This study aimed to examine PSS and MWB levels among Chinese nursing students and the association between these two variables. **Methods:** A cross-sectional survey was carried out on 612 nursing students from a higher vocational college in eastern China in March 2025. **Results:** The mean scores of PSS and MWB were 47.98 ± 10.69 and 43.97 ± 14.19 , respectively. PSS was positively correlated with MWB ($r = 0.347$, $p < 0.001$). Simple linear regression analysis revealed a significant association between PSS and MWB ($B = 0.461$, 95% CI [0.362, 0.560], $p < 0.001$). After adjusting for demographic and health-related factors, PSS remained significantly positively associated with MWB ($\beta = 0.317$, $p < 0.001$), with the addition of PSS increasing the explained variance by 9.8%. **Conclusion:** PSS was independently associated with better MWB among Chinese nursing students. Higher education institutions may consider strengthening social support resources as a potential strategy to support nursing students' mental well-being.

Keywords

Nursing Students, Perceived Social Support, Mental Well-being, Cross-sectional Study