

**ORIGINAL PAPER**

**The Assessment of Nurses' Work Environment: The Case of a Greek General Hospital**

**Dimitra Gikopoulou, RN, MSc (c)**

General Hospital of Attica "KAT", Athens, Greece.

**Maria Tsironi, MD, PhD**

Associate Professor, Faculty of Nursing, University of Peloponnese, Sparta, Greece.

**Athina Lazakidou, PhD**

Assistant Professor, Faculty of Nursing, University of Peloponnese, Sparta, Greece.

**Ioannis Moisoglou, RN, MSc, PhD (c).**

Hemodialysis Unit, General Hospital of Lamia, Greece.

**Panagiotis Prezerakos, RN, MSc, PhD**

Assistant Professor, Faculty of Nursing, University of Peloponnese, Sparta, Greece.

**Correspondence:** Moisoglou Ioannis, RN, MSc, PhD (c). Hemodialysis Unit, General Hospital of Lamia, Greece. Postal address: 10 Strogylakou Street, 35100, Lamia, Greece. E-mail: giannismois@gmail.com.

**Abstract**

**Background:** Nurses work environment has been recognized as a major factor affecting both nurses' and patients' outcomes.

**Objective:** To assess nurses' work environment, concerning the five work environment aspects that emanate from the study instrument.

**Methodology:** A cross sectional study was conducted in a 536-bed Greek general hospital of the capital city of Greece, Athens. One hundred seventy four randomly selected nurses and assistant nurses were participated (response rate 91.6%). The Practice Environment Scale of the Nursing Work Index (PES-NWI) was used to assess nurses work environment.

**Results:** The participants assessed their work environment as non favorable. They rated low ( $\leq 2.5$ ) both the total PES-NWI (mean=2.16, SD=0.38) and 4 of the 5 the work environment aspects. In particularly, participants rated Staffing and resource adequacy lower of all aspects (mean=1.79, SD=0.44), Nurses participation in hospital affairs rated mean=1.97 (SD=0.48), Nursing foundations of quality scored mean=2.14 (SD=0.42) and Nurse manager ability, Leadership and support of Nurses rated mean=2.49 (SD=0.63). The only favorable aspect of nurses' work environment was Nurse-Physician collegial relations (mean=2.69, SD=0.55). Nurses' participation in continuous educational programs (CEP) was found as a statistical significant demographic characteristic ( $p=0.001$ ) that is correlated with the work environment. Nurses that participated in CEP rated higher the overall PES-NWI, compared with those that didn't. Also, participation in CEP was significantly associated with the subscales Nurses participation in hospital affairs ( $p=0.001$ ), Quality foundation ( $p=0.005$ ) and Nurse manager ability ( $p=0.04$ ).

**Conclusions:** Hospitals' administration and nurse leaders have to assess nurses work environment, recognize weaknesses and non favorable aspects and centre their efforts on its improvement, if they wish to establish and sustain safe and quality health services provision.

**Keywords:** Hospital, nurse, outcomes, patient, work environment.