



## STUDY OF THE PSYCHOEMOTIONAL STATE OF MOTHERS OF CHILDREN RECEIVING TREATMENT IN THE INTENSIVE CARE UNIT

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**Keywords:** *intensive care unit, stress scale, psychoemotional state, respondent, monitoring, PSS*

This article examines the topic “Study of the psychoemotional state of mothers of children receiving treatment in the intensive care unit.”

The main objective of the study is to assess the psychoemotional state of parents and to determine its significance in the process of children’s treatment.

The article analyzes the psychoemotional state of parents, their stress levels, and anxiety, as well as the impact of these factors on children’s health. The possibilities of improving the effectiveness of medical care services by enhancing the psychoemotional state of parents are also considered.

The article emphasizes the importance of providing psychoemotional support to parents within the healthcare system and substantiates the positive impact of such support on children’s health. The results of this study serve as a basis for developing new approaches in healthcare practice. Children receiving treatment in the intensive care unit are hospitalized together with their parents; that is, either the mother or the father stays in the same department where the child is admitted. The intensive care unit admits children requiring emergency medical care, those scheduled for elective or urgent surgical interventions, as well as children needing preoperative or postoperative observation and treatment.

In order to identify the type of assistance parents need, a questionnaire was developed. It assessed what kind of support is helpful or unhelpful, how parents cope with their child’s illness and treatment, which principles they follow when explaining the illness and treatment to the child, and how their relationship with the child



changes during the period of illness. The survey results showed that parents are often in a state of crisis and anxiety, exposed to multiple stress factors, experiencing pronounced emotional and physical exhaustion, and having a high need for support.

The study aimed to assess the psychoemotional state of parents of children treated in the intensive care unit and to determine its impact on medical services. Therefore, the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) was used. The PSS is a psychometric instrument designed to assess how stressful individuals perceive situations in their lives. It was developed in 1983 by S. Cohen, T. Kamarck, and R. Mermelstein and remains one of the most widely used standardized tools for assessing stress levels in healthcare, psychology, and social sciences. The advantage of the PSS is that it evaluates not only objective stressors but also subjective perceptions, such as feelings of lack of control and the ability to manage stress.

Analysis of responses obtained from 35 respondents using the PSS showed that the average stress level was slightly above 18 points, amounting to 18.94 ( $\approx 19$  points). According to PSS criteria, scores of 0–13 indicate low stress, 14–26 moderate stress, and above 27 high stress. Most participants were within the low to moderate stress range.

The minimum score among respondents was 4 points, while the maximum score was 23 points, indicating that no extremely high stress levels were observed in the study group. The relatively low dispersion and standard deviation ( $SD = 4.0$ ) indicate that stress levels among participants were relatively similar. The results also suggest that although participants perceive a certain degree of control over daily situations, they frequently experience anxiety, uncertainty, and emotional pressure, which are typical characteristics of groups with moderate stress levels.

Overall, the findings indicate the predominance of moderate stress among respondents. This highlights the need for psychological support and the implementation of preventive psychoeducational programs. The results are particularly important for clinical practice, psychological monitoring, and the development of interventions aimed at reducing stress.



In conclusion, the psychological state of parents directly affects the quality of medical care, communication, and the child's recovery process. Therefore, the psychological condition of parents in intensive care units should also be under medical supervision. Parents, especially mothers, often experience their child's illness very intensely. Mothers of critically ill children may suffer psychological trauma, and their reactions may be unpredictable. Consequently, an individualized approach from healthcare professionals is essential. Mothers should understand the importance and appropriateness of medical procedures and treatments prescribed by physicians and carried out by medical staff. When necessary, parents (especially mothers) may be trained to perform certain procedures, such as injections and inhalations.

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