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The Relationship Between Work Motivation and Nurse Performance in Mitra Sejati Hospital Medan

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ABSTRACT

Background: Nursing services largely shape a hospital's quality and public image, and these services depend on how well nurses perform. Weak performance among nurses frequently arises from an unsupported work climate and heavy workloads, both of which reduce patient satisfaction. Work motivation, whether intrinsic or extrinsic, acts as a psychological force that sustains professional achievement and productivity. An initial survey at Mitra Sejati General Hospital in Medan found that the nurse-to-patient ratio was inadequate, that rewards for high-achieving staff were not applied optimally, and that limited attention from supervisors had weakened motivation. Objective: To analyze the association between work motivation and the performance of nurses working in the inpatient wards of Mitra Sejati General Hospital, Medan. Methods: A descriptive-correlational study with a cross-sectional design was carried out. Of the 100 nurses in the inpatient wards, 49 were recruited through purposive sampling. Structured questionnaires gathered demographic data, work motivation scores, and performance scores. The data were examined with frequency distributions (univariate) and the Chi-Square test (bivariate) at a significance threshold of alpha < 0.05. Results: Most nurses (n=46; 93.9%) reported fairly good work motivation, and 43 nurses (87.8%) showed fairly good performance. The Chi-Square test produced a p-value of 0.000 (p < 0.05), which signals a significant association between the two variables. Conclusion: Work motivation is significantly associated with nurse performance at Mitra Sejati General Hospital, Medan, and stronger motivation accompanies better quality of nursing care.

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INTRODUCTION

Hospitals are healthcare facilities offering comprehensive services, and they carry considerable safety risks for patients, their companions, visitors, staff, and the surrounding environment. For this reason, safety and health must be safeguarded to deliver secure and comfortable care (Regulation of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia No. 11, 2017). Under Regulation of the Minister of Health Number 3 of 2020, a hospital is an institution that delivers full-scope individual health care

covering inpatient, outpatient, and emergency services; consequently, it depends on human resources capable of delivering the best possible services to the public.

The way healthcare personnel deliver nursing care in hospitals is among the factors that shape a hospital's reputation and service quality; indeed, healthcare personnel are reported to account for as much as 80% of the influence on achieving good population health (Brema, 2019). As professionals with an essential part in delivering nursing care, nurses must keep upgrading their services in step with advances in science and technology (Law Number 38 of 2014; Regulation of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2019). Nurses make up the biggest share of the healthcare workforce, so, as the largest group of service providers, they carry the obligation of continually raising the quality of nursing care (Kosegeran et al., 2019). Enhancing individual nurse performance is one route toward this goal.

Nurse performance tends to decline when the work setting is unsupportive and workloads are excessive (Pujiyanto & Hapsari, 2021). Weak performance may leave patients and their families dissatisfied and unwilling to return to the facility, which eventually harms the hospital's finances and reputation. Both internal and external factors shape performance; among the internal ones, motivation stands out, since tasks are hard to complete effectively when willingness and drive are absent (Abdullah, 2018).

Internal employee factors are decisive for reaching and sustaining a high level of performance, and work motivation is regarded as the main driver among them. According to Expectancy Theory and Goal Theory, how people behave and how productive they are at work depend largely on how far their needs and incentives are fulfilled. Work motivation can be understood as the process that determines the strength, direction, and persistence of a person's efforts toward organizational and personal objectives. It is commonly split into intrinsic forms (for example responsibility, achievement, and personal development) and extrinsic forms (for example praise from supervisors, financial incentives, administrative rules, and working conditions). When motivation is lacking, nurses' morale falls, tasks are completed below standard, and the quality of nursing care suffers.

In practice, a gap frequently appears between what institutions expect and the actual motivation and performance of their nurses. A preliminary investigation at Mitra Sejati General Hospital (RSU) Medan found 197 nurses assigned to the various inpatient units, suggesting that staffing is not well matched to the heavy patient load. In addition, high-performing staff receive few rewards and little supportive attention from management, which erodes both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Nurses often feel that their efforts and results go unrecognized, and this feeling directly affects their work ethic.

Earlier studies underline how closely these two variables are linked. Sinambela (2021) reported a positive relationship of moderate strength

that was statistically significant between work motivation and nurse performance. Hasan et al. (2021) reached a comparable conclusion at Sitanala General Hospital, Tangerang, showing that work motivation contributes meaningfully to better nurse performance. Prompted by these considerations, the authors set out to investigate the relationship between work motivation and nurse performance at Mitra Sejati General Hospital.

METHOD

A descriptive-correlational design with a cross-sectional approach was used. The study sought to establish whether work motivation is related to nurse performance at Mitra Sejati Hospital. Data collection took place in the hospital's inpatient wards between December 15, 2023 and January 15, 2024.

The population comprised 100 nurses assigned to the inpatient wards of Mitra Sejati Hospital. Using Vincent's (1991) formula, a sample of 49 nurses was determined and recruited by purposive sampling, then distributed proportionally across the six inpatient wards (Sakura, Bougenville, Amarilis, Tulip, Flamboyan, and Teratai).

Three instruments were used: a demographic questionnaire, a work motivation questionnaire, and a nurse performance questionnaire, all developed by the researcher from a literature review. The motivation questionnaire contained 20 items representing the dimensions of achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, and self-development. The performance questionnaire likewise contained 20 items representing quality, quantity, timeliness, and effectiveness. Responses to both were scored on a four-point Likert scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree), and total scores were grouped as good (61–80), fair (41–60), or poor (20–40).

Frequency distributions were computed for each variable (univariate analysis), and the Chi-Square test was applied to assess the association between work motivation and nurse performance (bivariate analysis) at a significance level of $p<0.05$. Research ethics were observed through informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality of respondents' data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Forty-nine nurses from the inpatient wards of Mitra Sejati Hospital, Medan, took part in the study. Table 1 presents their characteristics.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics at Mitra Sejati Hospital (n=49)

Characteristics	Category	f	%
Gender	Male	13	26.5
	Female	36	73.5
Age	20–30 years	5	10.2
	31–40 years	23	46.9
	41–50 years	21	42.9
Education	D3 Nursing	40	81.6
	Bachelor of Nursing	2	4.1
	Nurses	7	14.3
Length of work	1–8 years	24	49.0
	9–16 years	21	42.9
	17–24 years	4	8.2

Source: Primary Data, 2024

Table 2. Distribution of Nurses by Level of Work Motivation

Work motivation	f	%
Not good	2	4.1
Pretty good	46	93.9
Good	1	2.0
Total	49	100

Source: Primary Data, 2024

Table 3. Distribution of Nurses by Level of Performance

Performance	f	%
Not good	3	6.1
Pretty good	43	87.8
Good	3	6.1
Total	49	100

Source: Primary Data, 2024

Table 4. Cross-Tabulation of Work Motivation and Nurse Performance

Work motivation	Poor Performance f (%)	Fairly Good Performance f (%)	Good Performance f (%)	Total f (%)	p-value
Not good	2 (100.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (100)	0.000
Pretty good	1 (2.2)	43 (93.5)	2 (4.3)	46 (100)	
Good	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (100.0)	1 (100)	
Total	3 (6.1)	43 (87.8)	3 (6.1)	49 (100)	

Source: Primary Data, 2024

1. Characteristics of Respondents

The findings showed that the majority of respondents were female (73.5%), aged 31–40 years (46.9%), held a Diploma III (D3) in Nursing qualification (81.6%), and had 1–8 years of work experience (49.0%). These characteristics provide an overview of the nurses involved in inpatient care at Mitra Sejati Hospital, Medan. The predominance of nurses aged 31–40 years indicates that most respondents were within a

working-age group with professional experience in providing nursing care. Similarly, their educational background and work experience represent important characteristics in understanding their professional responsibilities and performance. These characteristics provide context for interpreting the findings on work motivation and nurse performance.

2. Nurses' Work Motivation

The results showed that almost all respondents (93.9%) had work motivation in the fairly good category, while 2.0% were categorized as having good motivation and 4.1% as having poor motivation. The questionnaire findings indicated that responsibility was the strongest dimension of motivation, particularly nurses' awareness of performing their duties properly and professionally. In contrast, the achievement dimension received the lowest responses, particularly regarding opportunities for promotion based on work performance. This suggests that although most nurses demonstrated a sense of responsibility toward their professional duties, opportunities for achievement and career advancement may require greater attention.

Similar findings were reported by Witdia et al. (2021) at Masyithoh Islamic Hospital, Bangil, Pasuruan, where 78.3% of respondents had fairly good work motivation. Neda and Ana (2019) also reported that 64.6% of respondents demonstrated a comparable level of motivation. Motivation can be understood as an internal drive that encourages individuals to undertake activities to achieve specific goals. Adequate motivation can encourage employees to perform their responsibilities effectively and contribute to workforce productivity (Haan et al., 2019).

Therefore, hospital management needs to maintain and strengthen nurses' work motivation through clear assignments and responsibilities, regular performance feedback, fair rewards and sanctions, appropriate incentives, and recognition of nurses who demonstrate good performance. These efforts may help strengthen nurses' sense of responsibility and encourage greater achievement in their professional roles.

3. Nurse Performance

The findings indicated that the majority of respondents (87.8%, or 43 nurses) had performance in the fairly good category. Meanwhile, 6.1% (3 nurses) were categorized as having good performance, and another 6.1% (3 nurses) had poor performance. These results suggest that most inpatient nurses were able to carry out their duties and responsibilities in providing nursing care according to existing operational standards, although their performance had not yet reached the highest category.

A similar finding was reported by Nurul et al. (2023), who found that 63.0% of respondents demonstrated fairly good performance. Nurse performance refers to the quality and quantity of work achieved when carrying out assigned professional responsibilities. Motivation is one of the internal factors associated with individual performance because sufficient

willingness and commitment are needed to complete work effectively (Abdullah, 2020).

The findings suggest that maintaining good nursing performance requires continued attention to professional responsibilities, work commitment, and institutional support. Hospital management should provide an environment that enables nurses to perform their duties effectively while supporting continuous improvements in the quality of nursing care.

4. Relationship Between Work Motivation and Nurse Performance

The results of the Chi-Square analysis demonstrated a statistically significant relationship between work motivation and nurse performance at Mitra Sejati Hospital, Medan ($p < 0.001$). Among the 46 nurses with fairly good work motivation, 93.5% also demonstrated fairly good performance. This finding indicates that work motivation is significantly associated with nurses' ability to carry out their professional responsibilities. Nurses with better work motivation tended to demonstrate better performance in providing nursing care.

These findings are consistent with previous studies conducted by Witjaksono et al. (2017) at the National Eye Center, Cicendo Hospital, Bandung; Melissa et al. (2020) at GMIM Bethesda General Hospital, Tomohon; and Amir et al. (2023) at GMIBM Monompia Hospital, which reported significant relationships between work motivation and nurse performance.

Furthermore, Keith Davis's theory, as cited in Salawangi (2018), explains that motivation is one of the factors associated with individual performance. Higher motivation may encourage individuals to perform their responsibilities more effectively. However, performance is not determined by motivation alone, as other factors may also contribute to the achievement of work targets.

These findings emphasize the importance of work motivation in supporting nurses' performance, particularly in inpatient care services. Although most nurses demonstrated fairly good motivation and performance, the relatively low achievement dimension indicates the need for greater attention to professional development and career advancement. Therefore, hospital management should strengthen motivational strategies through fair recognition, performance-based rewards, constructive feedback, and opportunities for career development to support improved nursing performance and quality of care.

CONCLUSION

The majority of nurses demonstrated fairly good work motivation (93.9%) and fairly good performance (87.8%). Statistical analysis revealed a significant relationship between work motivation and nurse performance ($p < 0.001$). These findings highlight the importance of maintaining and strengthening nurses' work motivation through fair rewards, regular performance feedback, and professional development

opportunities to support improved performance and the quality of nursing care.

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