

Commentary

The Importance of Job Satisfaction, Work Engagement, and Sufficient Staffing in the Nursing Practice

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Abstract: The commentary paper reviewed the above research study conducted by Wang et al. (2025), and the investigators examined the association between nurse staffing, job satisfaction, and work engagement, and how these variables impact the quality of care provision provided among the Chinese hospitals. Despite knowing that low staffing within the healthcare facilities is a global issue, Wang and colleagues believed that low staffing is negatively and significantly associated with nurse's welfare and patient care outcome. This issue causes an increase in burnout and decreased retention of healthcare providers within the clinical setting. It is important to consider and focus on improving and fostering job satisfaction and work engagement among nurses to provide better quality care even within a low staffing environment. According to Wang and colleagues, low staffing outcomes could be mitigated by encouraging workplaces to create healthy and supportive environments for the engaged and satisfied nurses. These would result in better out among patients and increase job fulfilment and welfare among nurses.

Keywords: Burnout, Job Satisfaction, Nurse Engagement, Nurse Staffing, Patient Care Quality, Workplace Environment

How to cite this paper:

Bundalian, K. (2025). The Importance of Job Satisfaction, Work Engagement, and Sufficient Staffing in the Nursing Practice. *World Journal of Nursing Research*, 4(1). DOI: 10.31586/wjnr.2025.6033

Received: March 1, 2025

Revised: April 11, 2025

Accepted: April 27, 2025

Published: May 1, 2025



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1. Implications for Practice and Research

- Positive reinforcement of career fulfillment and work engagement among nurses might lower burnout, improve nurse retention, and, therefore, directly improve the quality of treatment.
- Future research should examine the effects on nurse well-being, the quality of health care delivery of personnel, job satisfaction, and work engagement.

2. Commentary

This research explores how factors such as job satisfaction, work engagement, and staffing levels influence the relationship between nurse staffing and the quality of care provided. The research draws attention to several pressing issues, with insufficient staffing being a global concern. Wang et al. (2025) [1] investigate how nurses' perceptions of staffing levels affect the quality of care, particularly by examining factors such as job satisfaction and work engagement. I particularly valued the emphasis placed on nurses' perspectives, as this resonated with my own experience of being understaffed for over eight years, beginning with my first employment.

While my rigorous training proved beneficial in my overseas work, it became clear that this scenario eventually affected my well-being.

The nursing profession plays an essential role in healthcare systems globally, significantly contributing to the delivery of patient care. Nurses represent the largest percentage of healthcare providers, and their contribution to enhancing patient outcomes

is invaluable (Haddad et al., 2023) [2]. The healthcare sector encounters obvious difficulties due to staffing shortages, which is considered a global concern that is intensified by an aging population, increased employee turnover, and unexpected events such as the COVID-19 pandemic (Poon et al., 2022) [3]. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated nursing shortages and increased fatigue levels among healthcare workers, emphasizing the urgent need to improve work engagement and job satisfaction (McNeill, 2022) [4]. The ongoing shortage of nurses presents major challenges for healthcare systems across the globe (Buchan & R, 2002) [5]. The low number of nurses affects the well-being of healthcare professionals and the quality of patient care, resulting in burnout, job dissatisfaction, and decreased employee retention (Aiken et al., 2010) [6]. Moreover, Blegen et al. (1998) [7] found that inadequate nurse staffing is linked to increased burnout, negatively impacting both nurses' well-being and patient care quality. Burnout, often resulting from insufficient staffing, can significantly affect patient care outcomes (Blegen et al., 1998; Laschinger et al., 2001) [7,8]. Insufficient nurse staffing has been associated with poor health outcomes, increased death rates, as well as reduced patient satisfaction with care (Aiken et al., 2002) [9].

According to the World Health Organization (2022) [10], about half of its member countries report having less than three nurses per 1,000 people, meaning they are lower than the world standard. This issue is particularly obvious in countries such as China, where the nurse-to-patient ratio is dangerously low, resulting in issues with high-quality healthcare delivery (Shen et al., 2020) [11]. By the year 2030, the United States of America is projected to have a shortage of roughly 1 million nurses (Juraschek et al., 2019) [12], with equivalent shortages projected worldwide. Staffing numbers significantly influence treatment quality; however, job satisfaction and engagement play a major role in establishing this connection (Aiken et al., 2008) [13]. Wang et al. (2025) [1] studied the relationship between staffing levels, job fulfillment, and work involvement, as well as their overall impact on care quality in some Chinese hospitals.

A cross-sectional study was done by Wang et al. (2025) [1] in Beijing, China, with 2,142 trained nurses from 211 inpatient rooms in 13 hospitals. In which they utilized a two-stage sample method for the study. At first, simple selection sampling was used to find hospitals. After that, random sampling was used to choose which inpatient rooms were located within those hospitals of choice. In October as well as November of 2018, when the study took place, job satisfaction, work engagement, and observed staffing numbers were the major factors that were looked at. Work satisfaction was measured by a single-item questionnaire asking the nurses to rate how satisfied they were with their present job. Schaufeli et al. (2006) [14] developed a short questionnaire to measure work engagement, a positive work-related state of fulfillment that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption, and the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale was used in this study. The quality of care was measured by what the nurses personally said about the care rendered in their respective units. To gain insight into the direct and secondary effects of staffing on the standard of care provided through job involvement and satisfaction with work, the researchers used structural equation modeling (SEM) and percentile scaling methods. This study looked at how these factors affect the general quality of care and the outcomes. The problems of not having enough staff may be minimized by looking at how staffing levels are viewed.

89.7% of nurses surveyed by Wang et al. (2025) [1] said that the quality of care in their wards was either good or excellent, and 56.1% said that there were adequate staff members in their wards. The study discovered that factors like job satisfaction and interest in work played a big part in managing the connection between staffing numbers and the delivery of excellent care. Together, these factors accounted for about 60% of the

differences in the level of care. The higher the amount of joy and participation among nurses who evaluated the quality of care, were better, even though there were staffing issues. The feeling of being in control, or how dedicated and involved the staff at work can help to make up for the negative impacts of not having enough staff. Supporting these claims by the outcomes from a study that better work-related fulfillment and work involvement have been associated with lower rates of burnout and higher nurse retention helped keep the nursing workforce stable (Schaufeli et al., 2002; Aiken et al., 2002) [9,14]. The investigation showed that improving job fulfillment and interest at work could be an objective way to keep rendering high-quality care, even in places where employees are limited in what they can do. Wang et al. (2025) [1] concluded that increasing staff might not only be enough to improve treatment outcomes. They additionally stated that making the workplace pleasant for nurses would make them happier and more committed.

The study by Wang et al. (2025) [1] gives us an entirely new perspective on the complex association between nurse staffing, job satisfaction, work engagement, and the quality of care.

Although other research has shown that increasing treatment results depends on enough staff members, this study points out the importance of job satisfaction and work involvement in decreasing this association. The study demonstrates that although personnel levels are rather important, they are not the sole determinant of the quality of treatment. Even with staffing limitations, nurses who feel involved and fulfilled in their work are more likely to provide high-quality treatment in line with the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) concept, which contends that job resources, including satisfaction and engagement, can offset the negative consequences of job demands, like understaffing (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011) [15].

Many factors affect the healthcare system due to the shortage of nurses (Tamata et al., 2022) [16]. That is why this research's results have been particularly important, especially in clinical nursing. Considering extremely low nurse-patient ratios in places like China, one practical approach to help offset the negative consequences of understaffing is to increase job fulfillment and involvement among nurses. Even in resource-limited environments, the results support the theory that better care outcomes might result from the improved work environment, encouragement of emotional involvement in the task, and nurse empowerment.

The research's noteworthy strength could be in its utilization of a large, diverse sample from 13 hospitals, which facilitates a comprehensive understanding of the relationship among staffing, satisfaction, and care quality in a high-demand healthcare setting. The cross-sectional design of the study restricts the capacity to draw causal relationships. If utilized in this study, longitudinal research would enhance the understanding of the long-term impacts of job satisfaction and work engagement on care quality and nurse retention. The study evaluated factors that include work engagement and job satisfaction; however, it did not investigate other possible beneficial variables, such as methods of leadership, organizational atmosphere, or the training of nurses, which may significantly impact care quality (Laschinger et al., 2001) [8].

In regards to consequences to nursing practice, Wang et al. (2025) [1] emphasize the demand of paying attention to the work environment as well as staffing levels to improve the delivery of quality care. Although the workforce must be raised, healthcare organizations must also be focused on developing supportive workplace environments that boost employee satisfaction, contribution, and retention. Even in cases of shortages of workers, this comprehensive strategy could help to guarantee that nurses are motivated, which is involved, and ready to provide high-quality treatment.

Finally, Wang et al. (2025) [1] study provides an insightful assessment of the significance of work involvement and job satisfaction in raising the standard of living of care. Their studies draw attention to the need for a comprehensive strategy to solve the problems caused by nurse shortages. They suggest that creating a good work environment is equally necessary as increasing the number of team members makes a difference. These outcomes provide a feasible structure for enhancing nurse retention and quality of treatment globally, while the worldwide nursing profession's shortcoming keeps jeopardizing healthcare systems.

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