

Significance of Job Satisfaction and Quality Patient Care

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Abstract: This commentary letter was conducted to evaluate Wang et al.'s (2025) research study on the relationship between perceived staffing and quality of care among hospitals. The current study's findings show that the relationship between professional self-efficacy and job performance is mediated by work engagement. Life contentment influences work engagement, which is associated with enhanced job performance. However, involvement acts as a mediator between job performance and burnout, which could affect the quality of patient care. Staffing satisfaction and quality patient care are closely related, and it is essential for healthcare institutions to prioritize appropriate workforce levels and address the nursing shortage. However, there are still unanswered questions in this sector, such as researching nursing-specific care procedures, addressing data challenges, and understanding the connections between nursing practice and patient care outcomes. Future research should address the "black box" of nursing practice and address variations in the quality of patient care provided by nurses.

Keywords: Job Satisfaction, Quality Patient Care, Work Engagement, Staffing

1. Commentary

The number of nurses on staff has a significant impact on the quality of patient care in hospitals. Having enough nurses on the unit is crucial to safeguarding patient safety, preventing adverse events, and improving patient outcomes. Several studies have demonstrated the impact of nurse staffing on the quality of patient care; research also suggests that understaffing may increase patient mortality, medication errors, and infections associated with healthcare (Al Enezi, 2023) [1].

A study conducted by Wang et al. (2025) [2] aimed to explain the mediating roles of work engagement and job satisfaction in determining how nurses' perceptions of staffing affect the quality of treatment. Although job satisfaction and work engagement are two significant factors linked to the quality of care, it remains unclear how they mediate the relationship between perceived staffing and care quality. A cross-sectional questionnaire survey was administered to 2,142 clinical nurses working in 211 inpatient wards across 13 hospitals. Measures included work engagement, job satisfaction, perceived staffing adequacy, and assessment of care quality. Most respondents (89.7%) stated that the wards had sufficient staff, and 56.1% believed the level of treatment was good or better. The study's two primary conclusions are as follows: (a) perceived staffing had an impact on care quality through one direct and three indirect pathways, with the indirect effect outweighing the direct effect, and (b) job satisfaction and work engagement were significant mediators of the relationship between staffing and care quality. They concluded that increasing nurses' job satisfaction and work engagement could improve the quality of care they provide, which would be a good way to address the present nursing shortage.

According to Aventis Health (2024) [3], having sufficient nurses on staff is not only essential to a healthy and efficient healthcare system, but it is also a fundamental

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requirement. It is not merely a question of numbers, but a matter of understanding and the importance of sufficient nurse staffing for the quality of patient care. Healthcare institutions can improve patient outcomes, safety, reduce burnout, and achieve financial gains by prioritizing the appropriate workforce levels. Moreover, healthcare executives, legislators, and stakeholders must be fully aware of this significance and take proactive steps to guarantee that nurses are supported and patients receive the high-quality treatment they are entitled to. This problem is evident in most cases in healthcare, and it is our responsibility to address it.

A recent study by the American Nurses Association (2024) [4] stresses the urgency of the nurse staffing crisis to be address, which is having a detrimental impact on nurses' mental health, well-being, and the quality of patient care. This crisis, caused by several factors including cost-cutting measures, aging workforce, aging population, and rising patient complexity and demand, cannot be ignored. Research indicates that having sufficient nurses on staff not only improves health outcomes and increases satisfaction for both nurses and patients, but it is also a matter of ethical responsibility. Resolving nurse staffing issues benefits our patients, our nurses, and the health and welfare of our country. Healthcare institutions can address this by having a proper nurse staffing policy that implements minimum nurse-to-patient ratios.

A study conducted by Lasater et al. (2021) [5] showed that the workload of nurses in a public hospital varies significantly in the quality of patient car, ranging from nine to twenty-four patients per nurse. The probability of in-hospital death for patients increased by 4% for each extra patient added to the typical nurse's workload. Nurse-patient ratio with 18 patients per nurse had a 41% higher risk of dying, a 20% higher chance of being readmitted within 30 days of being discharged, a 41% longer stay, and a 68% lower likelihood of giving the hospital a high rating and a 55% lower likelihood of recommending it to friends and family. This finding is supported by Magshoud et al. (2022) [6], whose study demonstrated that the association between workload and nursing care quality is mediated by implicit rationing of nursing care. Due to their heavy workload and responsibility for a large number of patients, nurses are eventually forced to limit some crucial actions, which might lower the standard of nursing care.

Moreover, it was revealed that under poorer staffing conditions (i.e., smaller staffing coverage or lesser nurses per unit of patient care, and, less frequently in these studies, lower skill mix/education level of staff), researchers have found higher levels of adverse patient events (e.g., mortality and complications) and adverse nurse job outcomes (e.g., burnout). Studies with various designs that examined hospital care in different locations and periods have reported these conclusions. Several studies in this literature show significantly smaller reductions in adverse outcomes associated with the most favorable staffing conditions they observe. However, some researchers have found effects of 20 percent or greater reductions in adverse outcomes associated with increased/improved staffing (Clarke & Donaldson, 2023) [7]. Additionally, a study conducted by Nantsupawat et al. (2021) [8] revealed that the significantly increased probability of reporting poor quality of care was linked to inadequate staffing, a higher patient-to-nurse ratio, and insufficient resources. Higher probabilities of adverse events and lower-quality treatment were substantially correlated with higher nurse-reported poor quality of care . Missed care was associated with adverse outcomes and inferior quality of care in Thai university hospitals, and inadequate nurse staffing was found to be a contributing factor to missed care.

A study by Wei et al. (2023) [9] supports the relationship between nurses' work engagement, intention to leave, perceived quality of treatment, and job satisfaction. The decreased level of job engagement among nurses in this study, compared to previous

studies, particularly before the COVID-19 pandemic, may suggest a potential correlation with the impact of COVID-19. Nurse leaders must determine how to increase job satisfaction and retention, as work engagement and job satisfaction are closely related. This statement implies that most hospitals are short-staffed during the pandemic. However, the current study's findings showed that the relationship between professional self-efficacy and job performance was mediated by work engagement. The beneficial effects of professional dedication on job performance are moderated by self-efficacy; in fact, self-efficacy provides staff with the instruments and resources they need to enhance their accomplishments. Similarly, additional research has shown that job performance and life satisfaction are mediated by work engagement. Life contentment influences work engagement, which is associated with enhanced job performance. Staff who are happy with their lives are more likely to participate in setting goals and expanding their social networks, which leads to improved job performance and future job prospects. However, research indicates that involvement acts as a mediator between job performance and burnout. Burnout is triggered by an imbalance in personal effort, a lack of resources, and an inability to meet job standards.

On the contrary, researchers have typically discovered a greater chance of poor patient outcomes when staffing levels are lower. Staffing levels, especially those associated with nurse workload, also seem to be related to psychological states and experiences (such as burnout) and occupational health problems (such as back and needlestick injuries), which may be indicators of nurse turnover from particular positions and the profession (Clarke & Donaldson, 2023) [7].

According to Clarke and Donaldson (2023) [7], poor results are generally rare, even at the extremes of staffing, and do not occur in every situation when staffing is low. Other features of hospital working circumstances, such as individual nurse and patient characteristics, also have an impact on outcomes. According to a critical mass of studies, nurse staffing is one of several factors that should be included in safety practice and research. There is no denying that, in certain situations, staffing has an impact on at least some patient outcomes. Subtle questions, such as the best ways to measure staffing and the exact mechanisms by which future studies will clarify the staffing-outcomes relationship in real-world settings.

By combining the various topics covered in this paper, we have demonstrated the importance of trustworthy nursing staffing options for hospitals. A study has shown that the caliber of nursing personnel has a direct impact on patient outcomes, hospital productivity, and the personal well-being of nurses. However, this also presents an opportunity for significant improvement. Trustworthy staffing solutions are not just beneficial; they are essential to creating an environment that allows the growth of excellent patient care and employee satisfaction. The tactics and case examples presented demonstrate the revolutionary effects that careful, purposeful approaches to nursing staffing may have on the medical field (Woodpecker Healthcare Agency, 2023) [10]. These results make it abundantly clear that hospitals and other healthcare facilities have the potential to significantly enhance patient and nurse experiences, provided that innovation and adaptation are maintained in response to changing healthcare demands. This emphasizes our shared obligation to strive for excellence in nursing staffing solutions.

There are still many unanswered questions in this sector. Researching nursing-specific care procedures that are linked to safer patient care and safer, more effective interdisciplinary teamwork is necessary. One of the biggest obstacles to improving care delivery is the challenge of data, specifically a lack of metrics and reliable data sources. The intricacy of nursing assessment, planning, intervention, and evaluation must be acknowledged for future research to address the "black box" of nursing practice. At the

core of initiatives to enhance patient care outcomes is addressing variation in the quality of patient care provided by nurses, which is essential for deciphering discrepancies in the literature on nurse staffing. Ultimately, explaining the connections between nursing practice and the structure, method, and outcome of patient care is a top goal for future research (Clarke & Donaldson, 2023) [7].

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