

Volume 9, No. 1
April, 2026

e-ISSN : 2685-1997
p-ISSN : 2685-9068

REAL in Nursing Journal (RNJ)

Research of Education and Art Link in Nursing Journal

<https://ojs.fdk.ac.id/index.php/Nursing/index>

The Relationship Between Workload and Job Satisfaction Among Inpatient Nurses

Dian Paramita, Bayu Saputra, Rani Lisa
Indra, Lita, Defi Eka Kartika



**UNIVERSITAS
FORT DE KOCK
BUKITTINGGI**

Nursing Study Program
Universitas Fort de Kock Bukittinggi, Indonesia

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The Relationship Between Workload and Job Satisfaction Among Inpatient Nurses

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Suci Andari, Marlina Andriani, Sri Hayulita

ABSTRACT

Imbalance between work demands and individual satisfaction can affect service quality. This study aimed to determine the relationship between workload and job satisfaction of inpatient nurses at Ibnu Sina Islamic Hospital Bukittinggi. A quantitative study with a cross-sectional design involved 92 respondents selected through stratified random sampling. The instruments used were the Nursalam workload questionnaire and the Indonesian version of the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS). Chi-Square test results showed no significant relationship between workload and job satisfaction ($p = 0.726$). The findings revealed that 62 respondents (67.4%) had a high workload and 78 respondents (84.8%) experienced job dissatisfaction. It was concluded that nurses' dissatisfaction was more influenced by managerial factors and organizational policies. It is recommended that hospital management pay attention to workload distribution and evaluate the compensation and reward system. In addition, nurses are expected to maintain work quality through teamwork, effective communication, and professional commitment.

Keywords:

Diabetes mellitus, Family support, Blood sugar control compliance

Corresponding author:

Suci Andari

Email:

suciandari56@gmail.com

Universitas Mohammad
Natsir Bukittinggi

Introduction

Health services are a series of efforts carried out individually or collectively within an organization, aimed at providing promotive, preventive, curative, and rehabilitative services (TeraMedik, 2022). In facing the challenges of globalization and the increasing demand for healthcare services, hospitals are required to enhance their competitiveness as well as the performance of their healthcare personnel (Chandra & Putriana, 2023). The availability of professional, skilled, and competent healthcare workers is a key factor in ensuring

optimal, efficient, and equitable healthcare service quality (Hayulita et al., 2022). Therefore, the quality of healthcare services is highly dependent on the quality of available human resources, including nurses who play a crucial role as the main component in providing direct patient care (Marlina Andriani, Sri Hayulita, 2020).

Data from the Indonesian Ministry of Health (2023) show that nursing personnel constitute the largest proportion of healthcare professionals, accounting for 44.3% of the total health workforce in Indonesia, with 364,254 nurses

working in hospitals. At the regional level, the number of nurses in West Sumatra is recorded at 11,875. Meanwhile, in Bukittinggi City, according to data from the Central Bureau of Statistics of West Sumatra (2023), there are 957 nurses, and more specifically, at Ibnu Sina Hospital Bukittinggi, based on data from the Head of Nursing Division, there are 119 nurses.

With a role that operates 24 hours a day, nurses contribute directly to the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of services. Due to their high level of interaction with patients, the quality of nursing services becomes one of the main determinants of a hospital's image and overall quality (Rahmawati, 2021). However, in maintaining hospital quality, nurses' job satisfaction is often a determining factor, where high workload and job pressure can reduce their satisfaction and trigger job dissatisfaction, which has become a global concern (Hellín Gil et al., 2022).

Job dissatisfaction among nurses has the potential to affect the quality of nursing practice and has both direct and indirect impacts on patient satisfaction (Salahat & Al-Hamdan, 2022). The level of nurses' job satisfaction in hospitals is relatively low in many countries. A study in the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR) showed an average job satisfaction of only 17.9%, with Palestine having the highest (33%) and Lebanon the lowest (4.5%) (Isfahani et al., 2024). A study at Ummi Hospital Bogor found that 55.6% of inpatient

nurses had low job satisfaction (Paturahman et al., 2024), while at Santa Elisabeth Hospital Medan, 53.3% of nurses reported low satisfaction (Naibaho, 2024).

This dissatisfaction contributes to decreased work motivation, emotional instability, and suboptimal job performance (Kosim, A., Wicaksono, B., Alimi, S. & Gunawan, 2024). Hutami Pramesti & Piartrini (2020) found that work stress caused by disproportionate workload significantly reduces job satisfaction. Excessive workload can lead to stress, which ultimately decreases service quality. Purimahua et al., (2020) revealed that excessive work pressure plays a major role in shaping nurses' negative perceptions of their jobs, especially in private hospitals with limited human resources and facilities.

Research by Van Den Oetelaar et al., (2021) also showed that job demands in direct patient care and administrative burdens are significantly associated with nurses' workload. This workload increases with a high number of patients, pressure to work quickly, and additional tasks beyond direct care. Wahyuningsih et al., (2021) further revealed that nurses have indirect care workloads, such as preparing emergency equipment, coordinating with healthcare teams, and other administrative duties, which reduce their focus on providing nursing care. The shortage of nurses in each unit, unsupportive work environments, and tasks beyond nurses' authority further increase workload burdens.

Several previous studies have consistently shown a significant relationship between workload and nurses' job satisfaction. Research by Hikmat & Melinda, (2020) found a significant association using the Chi-Square test ($p = 0.031$). This is supported by Yulianda et al., (2024) who reported a significant relationship based on Spearman Rank analysis ($p = 0.000$). Similarly, Ermakasumayanti et al., (2024) also identified a significant association between workload and job satisfaction among staff nurses ($p = 0.002$). Overall, these findings indicate that workload is an important factor influencing nurses' job satisfaction in hospital settings.

Ibnu Sina Islamic Hospital Bukittinggi is a private general hospital managed by the West Sumatra Islamic Hospital Foundation and was inaugurated on October 30, 1969. The hospital is located at Jl. Batang Agam, Bukit Cangang Kayu Ramang, Guguk Panjang District, Bukittinggi City, West Sumatra Province. As one of the preferred healthcare providers, the hospital is committed to delivering excellent services through improving professionalism, strengthening resources, and implementing Islamic values in healthcare services.

Based on a preliminary study conducted on February 26-27, 2025, at Ibnu Sina Hospital Bukittinggi, it was found that the nurse-to-patient ratio in Ar Raudah and Ar Razi wards is 1:6. This ratio is far below the ideal standard set by the Indonesian Ministry of Health Regulation No. 56 of 2014 for Type C hospitals, which is 2 nurses for

3 beds or a ratio of 1:1.5 patients. In one shift, only 1-4 nurses are on duty to handle all patients in the ward. This means that one nurse may handle 6 to 7 patients in a 6-hour shift (360 minutes). As a result, each patient receives only about 51-60 minutes of care, which is far below the ideal nursing care time of 90-120 minutes per patient per day.

Nurses also reported that approximately 30-40% of their working time is spent on administrative tasks such as manual and electronic medical records documentation, daily reports, patient census, and management of medical equipment and drug logistics. If 120-140 minutes are spent on non-nursing tasks, only about 220-240 minutes remain for direct nursing care. This indicates that nurses work under time pressure and disproportionate responsibilities.

Based on interviews with 10 inpatient nurses regarding job satisfaction, 6 out of 10 nurses stated that they were dissatisfied with their working conditions. This dissatisfaction is caused by high job demands that are not matched with adequate rewards, such as limited incentives, lack of appreciation, and no salary differentiation between senior and junior nurses. Meanwhile, the other 4 nurses reported being fairly satisfied, not because of ideal working conditions, but due to intrinsic satisfaction from seeing patients recover and reunite with their families. For them, gratitude and the meaning of their role as nurses become a source of satisfaction despite high

job demands. Eight out of the ten nurses also added that administrative tasks, which should be handled by administrative staff, further increase their workload and reduce the time available for providing optimal nursing care. Physical burdens such as patient transportation, medication preparation, injections, and mental pressure in making quick decisions in emergency situations also contribute to the workload.

These phenomena indicate that nurses' workload remains a major challenge in the nursing profession. Suboptimal welfare, limited resources, and high job demands are important factors that must be addressed to maintain service quality without compromising nurses' well-being. Therefore, further research is needed to examine the relationship between workload and job satisfaction among inpatient nurses. The results of this study are expected to provide insights for policy-making to support nurses' welfare and improve the quality of nursing services.

Methods

1.1 Research Design

This study used a quantitative approach with a descriptive correlational design and a cross-sectional method to determine the relationship between workload and nurses' job satisfaction.

1.2 Setting and Samples

The study was conducted in the inpatient wards of Ibnu Sina Hospital Bukittinggi, Indonesia, from June 17 to

June 30, 2025. The population consisted of 119 nurses working in the inpatient units. The sample size was 92 respondents, determined using the Slovin formula with a proportionate stratified random sampling technique. The inclusion criteria were nurses with a minimum education level of a Diploma III in Nursing and a minimum working experience of ≥ 6 months. The exclusion criteria were nurses who were not present during the data collection period.

1.3 Measurement and Data Collection

The variables in this study were workload and job satisfaction. Data were collected using two instruments: the workload questionnaire developed by Nursalam (2017), consisting of 13 items measured on a 4-point Likert scale, and the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) Indonesian version, consisting of 36 items measured on a 6-point Likert scale. Both instruments have been tested for validity and reliability, with Cronbach's alpha values of 0.929 for the workload questionnaire and 0.890 for the job satisfaction questionnaire. Data collection was carried out by distributing questionnaires to respondents who had provided informed consent prior to participation.

1.4 Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS software. Univariate analysis was performed to describe the frequency distribution of variables, while bivariate analysis was conducted

using the Chi-Square test with a significance level of 0.05.

1.5 Ethical Considerations

This study was conducted by ensuring that all respondents provided informed

consent prior to participation. The confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents were maintained throughout the study.

Results

Table 1. Frequency Distribution of Respondents Characteristics (n=92)

No	Variable	F	%
1.	Gender	Male	10
		Female	82
2.	Age		10,9
		21-30 years	10
		31-40 years	59
		41-50 years	18
		>50 years	5
3.	Length of Work	1-3 years	3
		4-6 years	3
		> 6 years	86
			93,5
4.	Educational Level	Diploma III in Nursing	67
		Bachelor of Nursing	6
		Professional Nurse (Ners)	19
Total		92	100

Based on Table 1, the majority of respondents were female, totaling 82 individuals (89.1%), while male respondents accounted for 10 individuals (10.9%). In terms of age, more than half of the respondents were in the 31-40 years age group, totaling 59 individuals (64.1%), followed by 41-50 years (18 individuals; 19.6%), 21-30 years (10 individuals; 10.9%), and >50 years (5 individuals; 5.4%).

Based on length of work, most respondents had worked for more than 6 years, totaling 86 individuals (93.5%), while those who had worked for 1-3 years and 4-6 years were only 3 individuals each (3.3%). In terms of educational level, the majority of respondents held a Diploma III in Nursing (67 individuals; 72.8%), followed by Professional Nurse (Ners) graduates (19 individuals; 20.7%), and only 6 individuals (6.5%) held a Bachelor of Nursing degree.

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Nurses' Workload Levels

No	Workload	F	%
1.	Low	30	32,6
2.	High	62	67,4
	Total	92	100

Based on Table 2, most nurses were categorized as having a high workload, totaling 62 respondents (67.4%), while 30 nurses (32.6%) were categorized as having a low workload.

Table 3. Frequency Distribution of Nurses' Job Satisfaction Levels

No	Job Satisfaction Category	F (%)
1	Dissatisfied	78 (84.8)
2	Satisfied	14 (15.2)
	Total (n)	92 (100)

Based on Table 3, the majority of nurses were categorized as dissatisfied with their jobs, totaling 78 respondents (84.8%), while 14 respondents (15.2%) were categorized as satisfied.

Table 4. The Relationship Between Workload and Nurses' Job Satisfaction

No	Workload	Job Satisfaction		Total	P-Value
		Dissatisfied F (%)	Satisfied F (%)		
1	Low	26 (33.3)	4 (28.6)	30	0.726
2	High	52 (66.7)	10 (71.4)	62	
	Total (n)	78 (100)	14 (100)	92	

Based on Table 4, among 30 nurses with low workload, 26 individuals (33.3%) were categorized as dissatisfied, while 4 individuals (28.6%) were categorized as satisfied. Meanwhile, among 62 nurses with high workload, 52 individuals (66.7%) were categorized as dissatisfied, and 10 individuals (71.4%) were categorized as satisfied. The results of the Chi-Square statistical test showed that the Chi-Square value (χ^2) = 0.122 with a p-

value = 0.726 ($p > 0.05$). This indicates that there is no significant relationship between workload and nurses' job satisfaction. Thus, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted, indicating that there is no relationship between the two variables, while the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is rejected.

Discussion

The results of this study showed that the majority of nurses in the inpatient wards of Ibnu Sina Islamic Hospital Bukittinggi experienced a high workload (67.4%). This condition reflects substantial job demands, both in terms of quantity and complexity of tasks, particularly among nurses in the productive age group, those with longer work experience, and predominantly female nurses who are in primary service roles. These findings are consistent with studies by Purimahua et al. (2020), Dwi Agustian Faruk et al. (2024), and Ermakasumayanti et al. (2024), which also reported a dominance of high workload among nurses.

Theoretically, workload is influenced by work activities, responsibilities, and the utilization of working time. In this study, work pressure did not only originate from clinical duties but also from the demands for rapid decision-making, pressure from patients' families, and quality expectations from management. Although working time utilization was considered optimal, the complexity of tasks and psychological pressure kept the workload high, indicating an imbalance between job demands and nurses' capacity, which may lead to work fatigue and decreased quality of care.

The findings also revealed that the majority of nurses were categorized as dissatisfied with their jobs (84.8%). This dissatisfaction was predominantly found among nurses in the productive age group, those with longer work experience, and those with a Diploma (D3) education level, indicating that

work experience does not always correlate positively with job satisfaction. These results are consistent with studies by Muharni et al., (2022) Triarso (2023) and Rina Delfina, (2024), which also reported a predominance of job dissatisfaction among nurses.

According to Spector's theory, job satisfaction is influenced by various dimensions such as salary, promotion, rewards, work procedures, and interpersonal relationships. In this study, dissatisfaction was most prominent in aspects of rewards, salary, work procedures, and promotion opportunities, indicating the strong influence of organizational factors on job satisfaction. However, satisfaction remained high in aspects related to the nature of the job, coworker relationships, and communication, suggesting that intrinsic motivation and social support play important roles in maintaining nurses' morale despite suboptimal organizational conditions.

The results of the Chi-Square test showed that there was no significant relationship between workload and nurses' job satisfaction ($p = 0.726$; $p > 0.05$), thus the null hypothesis was accepted. These findings are in line with studies by Dwi Agustian Faruk et al. (2024), Adawiyah et al., (2022) and Novita Dwiwana, Andi Sastria, (2021), which also found no significant relationship between the two variables. This indicates that job satisfaction is not solely influenced by workload but also by other more complex factors.

Although most nurses with high workload tended to be dissatisfied, some nurses still reported being satisfied,

indicating the presence of protective factors such as meaning in work, interpersonal relationships, and effective communication. Even spiritual aspects played a role in shaping job satisfaction, as expressed by one respondent: *“For us, caring for patients is a form of worship. Even though it is tiring, it is part of our responsibility.”*

Conversely, some nurses with low workload were still dissatisfied, suggesting that factors such as salary, rewards, and promotion have a more dominant influence. Therefore, the relationship between workload and job satisfaction is not linear but is influenced by intrinsic, extrinsic, and cultural work values. This study provides important implications for the development of nursing science, particularly in hospital human resource management. Improving job satisfaction cannot rely solely on workload management but must also be supported by improvements in reward systems, compensation, and career development.

Implication and limitations

The findings of this study highlight the importance of addressing factors influencing nurses' job satisfaction beyond workload alone. Although workload is often considered a major determinant, this study shows that organizational factors such as reward systems, compensation, and career development opportunities play a more significant role. Therefore, hospital management should focus on improving these aspects to enhance nurses' job satisfaction and maintain the quality of healthcare services. Strengthening intrinsic motivation, fostering supportive

work environments, and improving communication among healthcare teams are also essential strategies to support nurses' well-being and performance.

However, this study has several limitations. First, this study used a cross-sectional design, which limits the ability to determine causal relationships between workload and job satisfaction. Second, the study was conducted in a single hospital, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other healthcare settings. Third, this study relied on self-reported questionnaires, which may be subject to response bias.

Future research is recommended to explore other factors influencing nurses' job satisfaction, such as organizational culture, leadership style, and work environment, as well as to use longitudinal or experimental designs to better understand causal relationships.

Conclusion

The majority of nurses in the inpatient ward at Rumah Sakit Islam Ibnu Sina Yarsi Bukittinggi experienced a high workload (67.4%) and were categorized as dissatisfied (84.8%). The analysis results showed no significant relationship between workload and job satisfaction ($p = 0.726$), indicating that job satisfaction is influenced by other factors such as rewards, compensation, and the work environment. Therefore, efforts are needed to improve human resource management systems, particularly in terms of rewards and career development, as well as further research to explore broader influencing factors.

Acknowledgments

The majority of nurses in the inpatient wards of Ibnu Sina Islamic Hospital Bukittinggi experienced a high workload (67.4%) and were categorized as dissatisfied (84.8%). The analysis results showed that there was no significant relationship between workload and job satisfaction ($p = 0.726$), indicating that job satisfaction is influenced by other factors such as rewards, compensation, and the work environment.

Therefore, efforts are needed to improve human resource management systems, particularly in the areas of rewards and career development. Further research is also recommended to explore other broader factors influencing nurses' job satisfaction.

Author contribution

The author was responsible for conceptualization, methodology development, data collection, formal analysis, and interpretation of the data. The author also contributed to writing the original draft, reviewing, and editing the manuscript, and approved the final version for publication.

Conflict of interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest related to this study.

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