

The Effect of Professional Competence, Work Motivation, and Workload, on Nurses Performance in The Patient Ward Sebening Kasih Hospital

Fachrul Rizal^{1*}, Grace Rumengan², Enrico Adhitya Rinaldi³

^{1,2}Master's Program in Hospital Administration, Universitas Respati Indonesia, Indonesia

³Prof. Dr. HAMKA Faculty of Medicine, University of Muhammadiyah, Indonesia

* Corresponding Author:

Email: fachrulrizal22032000@gmail.com

Abstract

The research problem arises from indications that some nurses experience difficulties in performing their nursing duties optimally, which can impact the quality of patient care. Unequal distribution of professional competence, low motivation due to a lack of recognition and career development opportunities, and a high workload resulting from an imbalance in the nurse-to-patient ratio are suspected to be the main causes of this decline in performance. The purpose of this study was to analyze the influence of professional competence, work motivation, and workload on nurse performance in the inpatient ward of Sebening Kasih Hospital, Pati. Central Java, Indonesia. This study, a descriptive quantitative study, recruited 42 respondents: nurses working in the inpatient ward of Sebening Kasih Hospital, Pati, who had worked in the ward for at least six months, were permanent or active contract nurses, and were willing to participate. The data collected consisted of primary data collected using a questionnaire. The results concluded that professional competence and work motivation had a positive and significant effect on nurse performance in the inpatient ward of Sebening Kasih Hospital, Pati. Central Java, Indonesia. Workload negatively affected nurse performance. The higher the workload, the lower their performance.

Keywords: Nurse performance; professional competence; work motivation, and workload.

I. INTRODUCTION

The performance of nurses in hospitals significantly determines the quality of healthcare provided to patients. They not only perform medical duties such as administering medication and monitoring vital signs but also provide emotional support to patients and their families. Accuracy and speed in responding to emergencies are important indicators of nurse professionalism[1]. The ability to collaborate with doctors and other medical personnel demonstrates that nurses play a key role in an integrated healthcare system. Nurses are also required to manage medical documentation accurately and consistently. In stressful situations, they must remain calm and focused to avoid procedural errors. Regular training and competency development are essential to maintaining service standards. With high dedication, nurses are at the forefront of ensuring patient safety and comfort[2]. On the other hand, nurses' performance is greatly influenced by a supportive work environment. Support from hospital management, the availability of adequate medical equipment, and a proportionate workload significantly contribute to their effectiveness. When nurses feel valued and have opportunities for development, this directly impacts their motivation and the quality of care they provide[3]. Good communication between medical teams also facilitates coordination and clinical decision-making. Nurses also play an educational role by providing patients with information about follow-up care and disease prevention.

In addition to technical skills, empathy and interpersonal skills are valuable assets that enhance patient trust. Objective and transparent performance evaluations are essential to ensure quality service standards are maintained[4]. Poor nursing performance can seriously impact patient safety and health. Medication errors, delayed response to emergencies, or inadequate monitoring of vital signs can worsen a patient's condition and even threaten their life. Furthermore, poor communication between nurses and patients or other medical personnel can lead to miscommunication, leading to medical errors. Patients who feel neglected are also more likely to experience emotional stress, which can slow the healing process[5]. Inaccuracies in medical records can disrupt the continuity of therapy and hinder the referral process. Patient dissatisfaction will also increase if they perceive unprofessional service. This can tarnish the overall image of the hospital. Moreover, the inability of nurses to build empathetic relationships can lead to patients being reluctant to return to the facility for treatment[6]. Another impact of poor nurse performance is that it disrupts

the effectiveness of the medical team. Collaboration between healthcare workers becomes disrupted if nurses do not carry out their duties responsibly and competently.

This can create an additional burden on other healthcare workers, such as doctors or nurses, ultimately leading to work fatigue and burnout[7]. The unbalanced workload can also lead to a decline in overall team morale. Inefficiencies in the service system also led to longer waiting times for patients. Hospitals can experience a decline in public trust and even face potential lawsuits if malpractice occurs due to negligence. Service quality evaluations can also result in low scores, which can impact hospital accreditation. Therefore, maintaining and improving nurse performance is crucial to ensuring quality and safety in healthcare[8]. Sebening Kasih General Hospital (RSU) is a privately owned type C hospital located in Pakis Village, Tayu District, Pati Regency, Central Java, precisely at Jl. Raya Tayu–Pati KM 3, No. 99A, operates 24 hours a day. This hospital began providing services on March 14, 2011, initially as a clinic with several basic services before developing into a hospital with complete facilities such as the Emergency Room, ICU, outpatient and inpatient services, radiology, laboratory, and specialist polyclinics such as obstetrics, pediatrics, internal medicine, surgery, and dentistry. The Inpatient Room at RSU Sebening Kasih Pati offers a variety of class options and facilities designed for the comfort and medical needs of patients. There are VVIP rooms available with one patient bed, a bed for a companion, a bedside cabinet, a sofa, a table and chairs, a bathroom with a water heater, a smart TV, a refrigerator, a hot-cold dispenser, Wi-Fi, a mini pantry, and air conditioning all intended to ensure the comfort of patients and visitors during treatment.

In addition, the hospital also provides class I (Sapphire/Diamond), class II (Pearl, Emerald, Diamond, Aquamarine), and class III rooms, which include Aquamarine and Diamond, with the number of beds adjusted to the needs of general patients. Sebening Kasih Hospital Based on SIGARDA data as of July 20, 2025, Sebening Kasih Hospital has a total of 145 inpatient beds, with 101 occupied and 44 available. The performance of nurses in the inpatient wards of Sebening Kasih Hospital plays a central role in ensuring the quality of care and patient safety during treatment. Nurses are at the forefront of routinely monitoring patients' conditions, from measuring vital signs to implementing nursing procedures according to medical instructions. They also serve as liaisons between patients, doctors, and families, communicating health updates. Furthermore, the presence of competent and empathetic nurses in the inpatient wards significantly contributes to patient satisfaction and the hospital's reputation. Sebening Kasih Hospital in Pati, as a hospital serving both general and BPJS patients, must ensure that every patient, regardless of treatment class, receives fair and professional treatment. Nurses who can educate patients and their families regarding follow-up care, medication use, and infection prevention measures contribute to a successful healing process. In inpatient settings, where patients spend significant time in the hospital, the nurse's role as an emotional supporter is a crucial aspect that should not be overlooked.

Friendly, patient, and responsive nurses can create a positive experience for patients, indirectly accelerating recovery[4]. Based on interviews and data collection related to nurse performance assessments in the inpatient wards of Sebening Kasih Hospital, the most frequently highlighted issues were related to competency and work motivation. Many nurses felt they had not received sufficient training or skills development to support optimal performance of their duties. This lack of ongoing training led to some nurses feeling insecure in handling complex clinical cases, impacting the quality of care[9]. Furthermore, low work motivation has also been highlighted, caused by a lack of appreciation, limited career development opportunities, and a work environment that is not fully supportive. Weak motivation also impacts decreased enthusiasm and initiative in completing tasks. In relation to assessment criteria, aspects of competence and professionalism are closely related to this problem and must be prioritized in improving hospital HR management[10]. Workload issues are also a major complaint among nurses. The disproportionate number of patients compared to the number of nursing staff in inpatient wards forces them to work under high pressure and long hours. This situation not only leads to physical and mental exhaustion but also reduces the quality of communication between nurses and patients, potentially reducing the quality of care provided[11]. Many nurses complain that their high workload makes it difficult for them to perform their duties optimally according to standard operating procedures (SOPs).

Consequently, management and communication aspects, which are part of the performance assessment indicators, are also affected. Hospitals need to review the nurse-to-patient ratio to ensure a more equitable and well-managed workload to ensure patient safety and the well-being of nursing staff. The research problem in this study is how nurses' performance in the inpatient ward of Sebening Kasih General Hospital is thought to be influenced by professional competence, work motivation, and workload. This problem arises from indications that some nurses experience difficulties in carrying out their nursing duties optimally, which can impact the quality of patient care. Unequal professional competence, low motivation due to a lack of recognition and career development, and a high workload resulting from an imbalance in the nurse-to-patient ratio are suspected to be the primary causes of the decline in performance. These three factors are considered to influence important aspects of performance assessment, such as managerial ability, discipline, effective communication, and friendliness in service. Therefore, it is essential to investigate the extent to which these three variables influence nurse performance, enabling hospitals to develop targeted strategies for enhancing service quality. This study aims to determine and analyse the influence of professional competence, work motivation, and workload on the performance of nurses in the inpatient ward of Sebening Kasih Pati Hospital.

II. METHODS

This research design is quantitative descriptive with a survey method, which aims to describe and analyze the influence of professional competence, work motivation, and workload on nurse performance in the inpatient ward of Sebening Kasih Hospital, Pati. This design was chosen because it can explain the relationship between variables objectively and measurably based on numerical data collected from respondents through a questionnaire instrument[12]. This study examines the impact of professional competence, work motivation, and workload on the performance of nurses in the inpatient ward of Sebening Kasih Hospital, Pati, Central Java, Indonesia. The population in this study was all 58 nurses working in the inpatient ward of Sebening Kasih Hospital, Pati. This population was selected because they are directly involved in providing nursing services and have relevant work experience related to the research variables, namely professional competence, work motivation, workload, and nursing performance. The population is considered to have sufficient information to explain the influence of the three independent variables on the dependent variable in the context of inpatient services. The sample in this study was taken using a purposive sampling technique, namely selecting respondents based on certain criteria relevant to the research objectives[12].

The sample consisted of 42 respondents, who were nurses working in the inpatient ward of Sebening Kasih Pati General Hospital, had a minimum work period of 6 months in the inpatient ward, and had the status of permanent nurses or active contracts. They were willing to participate as respondents by signing a questionnaire form. This research was conducted in August 2025. The location of this research was at Sebening Kasih General Hospital, located at Jl. Raya Pati - Tayu No. 99A KM. 3, Kebun Dan Tambak Area, Pakis, Tayu District, Pati Regency, Central Java 59155. The data collection technique employed in this research involved distributing questionnaires. This research used quantitative analysis. Quantitative data analysis is the process of processing and interpreting numerical data obtained from research instruments (e.g., questionnaires or surveys) to test hypotheses or answer research questions objectively and measurably[13]. Multiple linear regression analysis is used to determine the simultaneous effect of more than one independent variable on a dependent variable. In this study, the influence of professional competence, work motivation, and workload on nurse performance was measured in the inpatient ward of Sebening Kasih Hospital, Pati, Central Java, Indonesia.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Source: Processed Primary Data (2025)

Hypothesis	Coefficient	t	Sig	Conclusion
Professional competence has a positive and significant influence on nurse performance	0.442	3,376	0.002	Hypothesis 1 is accepted

Work motivation has a positive and significant effect on nurse performance	0.528	3,961	0.001	Hypothesis 2 is accepted
Workload has a negative and significant effect on nurse performance	-0.251	-2,095	0.043	Hypothesis 3 is accepted

Fig 1. t-Test Results

Source: Processed Primary Data (2025)

The results of the multiple linear regression test indicate a significant relationship between the independent variables (Professional Competence, Work Motivation, and Workload) and the dependent variable (Nurse Performance). The resulting equation is:

$$Y = 0.734 + 0.442X_1 + 0.508X_2 - 0.251X_3$$

The regression equation formed is $Y = 0.734 + 0.442X_1 + 0.508X_2 - 0.251X_3$, where Y represents nurse performance, X1 is professional competence, X2 is work motivation, and X3 is workload. The unstandardized coefficient B shows that for every one-unit increase in Professional Competence, nurse performance is estimated to increase by 0.442, assuming other variables are constant. The same applies to Work Motivation, where every one-unit increase in work motivation will increase nurse performance by 0.508. Conversely, workload has a negative coefficient of -0.251, which means that an increase in workload will decrease nurse performance by 0.251. The standardized coefficient (Beta) provides an overview of the relative contribution of each independent variable to nurse performance. The Beta value for Work Motivation (0.469) is higher than that of Professional Competence (0.400) and Workload (-0.210), indicating that work motivation contributes significantly to improving nurse performance. This indicates that work motivation has a more significant impact on improving performance compared to professional competence and workload. In this context, hospitals should pay more attention to the motivational aspect of nurses to encourage better performance. The results of the multiple linear regression test indicate that work motivation has a stronger influence on nurse performance compared to professional competence. This is evident from the standardized coefficients Beta value, where work motivation obtained a Beta of 0.508 with a significance level <0.001 , while professional competence had a Beta of 0.442 with a significance level of 0.002.

This means that when the two variables are compared relatively, work motivation is more dominant in improving nurse performance. This finding confirms that increasing motivation, both intrinsic and extrinsic, is a key factor in driving optimal performance. The t-test results show that Professional Competence has a positive and significant influence on Nurse Performance. The regression coefficient for Professional Competence is 0.442, with a t-value of 3.376 and a Sig. of 0.002, which is smaller than 0.05. This indicates that increasing professional competence will have a positive effect on nurse performance. Hypothesis 1, which states that professional competence has a positive and significant effect on nurse performance, is accepted. Therefore, developing nurses' professional competence is an important factor in improving their performance. The results of the hypothesis test show that Professional Competence has a positive and significant influence on the performance of nurses in the Inpatient Ward of Sebening Kasih General Hospital, with a regression coefficient value of 0.442 and a Sig. of 0.002, which is smaller than 0.05. This indicates that the higher the nurses' professional competence, the better their performance will be. Relating these results to the respondent profile, most nurses in the inpatient ward are aged between 25 and 35 years, with the majority having a Diploma degree. Nurses in this age group are generally in a relatively mature phase of their careers, so the influence of professional competence on nurse performance is very significant.

With a more diverse educational background, both diploma and bachelor's degrees, nurses at Sebening Kasih Hospital have sufficient understanding and practical skills to perform their duties according to standards. In this regard, professional competence plays a crucial role in determining how nurses manage their daily tasks, such as providing care according to procedures, maintaining accuracy, and coordinating with the medical team. Additionally, ongoing training is necessary to enhance nurses' professional competence and maintain and improve service quality. Overall, the influence of Professional Competence on Nurse Performance at Sebening Kasih Hospital, Pati, is very significant and positive. Good competence not only improves nurses' technical abilities in providing care according to procedures but also enhances their ability to cope with pressure and workload. As nurses' professional competence improves, their performance

will also improve, which in turn will improve the overall quality of hospital services. Hospitals need to pay more attention to developing this competence, both through regular training, skills development, and updating the latest knowledge in the field of nursing.

The right strategy and high professional competence will be a strong foundation for nurses to provide optimal and quality care for patients. Furthermore, the t-test results also show that Work Motivation has a positive and significant effect on Nurse Performance. The regression coefficient for work motivation is 0.528, with a t-value of 3.961 and a Sig. of 0.001, which is also smaller than 0.05. This indicates that the higher the level of work motivation, the higher the nurse's performance. Hypothesis 2, which states that work motivation has a positive and significant effect on nurse performance, is also accepted. This motivational factor has been proven to be a crucial aspect in enhancing the productivity and quality of nursing work in hospitals. The results of the hypothesis test show that Work Motivation has a positive and significant effect on Nurse Performance in the Inpatient Ward of Sebening Kasih General Hospital, with a regression coefficient of 0.528 and a Sig. of 0.001, which is smaller than 0.05. This indicates that the higher the nurse's work motivation, the better their performance in providing nursing services. Regarding the respondent profile, most nurses involved in this study were in the 25-35 age range, an age group typically full of energy and ambition for development. Furthermore, most respondents had diplomas and bachelor's degrees, indicating differences in work motivation related to educational level and professional ambition.

Nurses with high motivation tend to be more active in participating in training, updating their knowledge, and applying their skills in their daily work. Therefore, developing work motivation through rewards and recognition is crucial in improving nurse performance in this hospital. The results of the hypothesis test also showed that Work Motivation significantly influenced Nurse Performance, indicating that the higher the work motivation, the higher the nurse performance. In the respondent profile, most nurses had a high motivation to continue developing in their profession. This is evident in the average score for statement MK3, which indicates a strong desire to continuously improve their competence. This desire to develop is crucial because nurses who are motivated to learn and improve their skills tend to perform better in carrying out their duties. This work motivation serves as a driving force for nurses in facing existing challenges, such as high workloads or difficult patient conditions. Therefore, hospitals must provide opportunities and support for nurses to continuously develop themselves through relevant training and educational programs. The results of hypothesis testing and descriptive statistics indicate that work motivation has a significant influence on the performance of inpatient nurses at Sebening Kasih General Hospital. High work motivation, whether stemming from appreciation, a sense of moral responsibility, or personal satisfaction in helping patients, has been shown to improve nurse performance. By addressing factors that influence work motivation, such as relationships with coworkers, recognition, and opportunities for development, hospitals can create a work environment conducive to nurses working with enthusiasm and dedication.

Therefore, managing work motivation effectively should be a priority in efforts to improve the quality-of-care services in hospitals. The t-test results for Workload showed a negative and significant effect on Nurse Performance. The regression coefficient for workload was -0.251, with a t-value of -2.095 and a Sig. of 0.043, which is smaller than 0.05. This means that increasing workload decreases nurse performance. Therefore, Hypothesis 3, which states that workload has a negative and significant effect on nurse performance, is accepted. Hypothesis 3: Balanced workload management is crucial to maintaining the performance and well-being of nurses in hospitals. The results of the hypothesis test showed that Workload had a negative and significant effect on Nurse Performance in the Inpatient Ward of Sebening Kasih General Hospital, with a regression coefficient of -0.251 and a Sig. of 0.043, which is smaller than 0.05. This indicates that the higher the workload borne by nurses, the lower their performance in providing nursing services. Relating to the respondent profile, most nurses in the inpatient ward have worked between 1 and 5 years, which means they are quite experienced in treating patients. However, a high workload can cause stress, which in turn reduces nurses' ability to provide optimal care. Most nurses are also between 25 and 35

years old, an age when they are still in a busy phase of their careers. When the workload increases, nurses may find it difficult to balance the quality of service with the number of patients they must treat.

IV. CONCLUSION

Professional competence has a positive and significant impact on nurse performance in the inpatient ward at Sebening Kasih Hospital, Pati. Improving professional competence, such as understanding nursing procedures and professional ethics, significantly contributes to improving nurse performance. Therefore, it is crucial for hospitals to continuously develop nurses' professional competence through training and continuing education. Work motivation has also been shown to have a positive and significant impact on nurse performance. The higher a nurse's work motivation, whether stemming from recognition, satisfaction in patient care, and positive relationships with colleagues, the better their performance. Hospitals need to create an environment that enhances work motivation, such as by providing recognition and incentives commensurate with nurse performance. Workload negatively impacts nurse performance. The higher the workload, the lower their performance. This demonstrates that effective workload management is crucial for maintaining quality care and nurse well-being.

Hospitals need to balance task allocation and ensure nurses have sufficient rest time to maximize their performance. Therefore, it is important for hospitals to ensure that nurses' workloads are well managed to avoid a negative impact on their performance. Overall, a high workload can lead to a decline in Nurse Performance at Sebening Kasih Hospital, both physically and mentally, and in terms of the quality of service to patients. The results of the hypothesis test showed that excessive workloads significantly reduce nurse performance, which impacts the quality of care provided. Therefore, workload management should be a priority in improving nurse performance. Hospitals need to pay attention to factors that can reduce workload, such as a balanced division of tasks, providing adequate rest time, and reducing the number of patients nurses can treat at one time. In addition, hospitals also need to provide emotional support and training for nurses to manage stress associated with workload. With better workload management, it is hoped that the quality of nurse performance can improve, which in turn will improve the overall quality of hospital services.

V. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The researcher teams would like to express their deepest gratitude to the academic lecturer of Universitas Respati Indonesia for their invaluable guidance and support throughout this research.

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