NURSES' WORK MOTIVATION IN PROVIDING NURSING CARE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the performance of nurses during the COVID-19 pandemic in providing nursing care to achieve goals in meeting the needs and independence of patients. The research method used is quantitative research with a descriptive survey design. The results showed that the majority of respondents were female, as many as 57 people (79.2%), the last education was D3 nursing, as many as 26 people (36.1%), the average age was 34.5 years with the lowest age of 23 years and the highest was 47 years, the average length of work was 9.03 years with the lowest tenure was two years and the highest was 22 years, and intense work motivation as many as 40 people (55.6%). In conclusion, the explanation of nurses in providing nursing care during the COVID-19 pandemic is in the low category.

Keywords: Nursing Care, Work Motivation, COVID-19 Pandemic

INTRODUCTION

A pandemic is a global outbreak of infectious disease, either a new infection or a pre-existing contagious illness, that is re-established with high exposure cases and even deaths with disruptions not only to physical conditions but also to social and economic life. Sometimes new topics are found in geographical areas that have yet to be exposed. Pandemics usually spread through interpersonal contact or droplet splash, affecting the respiratory system. Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a pandemic that occurred and was discovered in late 2019 caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus and attacks the respiratory system and is transmitted through close physical contact due to droplet splashes from the respiratory tract of patients sent airborne through aerosols (WHO, 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted people all over the world. The pandemic was sudden and shocked the healthcare system in most countries. The most affected professions are health workers (Firouzkohui et al., 2022). Nurses are one of health workers with their own challenges in providing nursing care during a pandemic. Still, they also have the highest risk of becoming victims of COVID-19 exposure (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2020). Nurses experience various problems when faced with pandemic conditions. The high risk of transmission has led to changes in the flow of care to protect patients and health workers. The use of complete Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is the cause of psychological problems in health workers. Fatigue, anxiety, fear, and even depression have been found in nurses since they first encountered the pandemic. A total of 60.5% reported emotional exhaustion, 14.3% for anxiety levels, 91.2% experienced fear, and 10.7% of nurses experienced depression (Hu et al., 2020). In addition, research by Cao et al., (2020) found that when caring for

patients diagnosed with COVID-19, nurses feel a more significant workload, experience fatigue, feelings of frustration, suffer from sleep disorders, decreased appetite, often cry, and even think about suicide.

Health workers were found to be the most affected profession due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Comparison of the level of fatigue of health workers, especially nurses who are in the emergency room (13%) is lower than nurses who work in the inpatient room, which is 39% (Wu et al., 2020). According to Cai et al., (2020) stated that health workers expressed anxiety about the safety of themselves and their families was the most felt thing. In addition, according to research by Valizadeh et al., (2023) the mental health of nurses is a priority during and after a crisis (be it a pandemic or a catastrophic event). Stress management for nurses is needed to improve performance during times of crisis.

Nurses have an essential role as the frontline in providing care during the COVID-19 pandemic. Still, the high physical and psychological impacts experienced by nurses during the COVID-19 pandemic affect nurses' performance in providing optimal nursing care. Even during a pandemic, nursing care is still carried out by offering assessments, minimizing complications with close monitoring, emergency measures, and handling crisis cases (Fatih, 2020). The global conflict related to COVID-19 has caused a significant increase in the number of care visits, impacting the healthcare system. To maintain optimal nurse performance, the work environment must consider and focus on several factors affecting nurses' work motivation. Decreased motivation leads to physical and psychological stress, reduced productivity, and poor working conditions (Mehdizadeh-Somarin et al., 2022). Another study also showed a decrease in work motivation in nurses working in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) room, one of which was related to the limited movement of nurses due to the use of PPE (Şimşek et al., 2022).

The role of nurses during this pandemic is to provide good nursing care. Still, challenging situations such as high risk of transmission infections, lack of resources, workplace changes, lack of knowledge, doubts, and fears lead to decreased performance quality and low quality of service (Firouzkohui et al., 2022). The performance of nurses in providing nursing care is a series of nurse interactions with patients and the environment which aims to achieve goals in meeting the needs and independence of patients. Regardless of any conditions, nurses are always required to work well even though they have never been faced with a case like before. Given the importance of work motivation in emergency/pandemic nursing services, further review is needed regarding this matter. Unlike other studies, this study looks at nurses' work motivation in providing nursing care during COVID-19.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research is quantitative with a descriptive survey design. This study was conducted to see nurses' work motivation in providing nursing care during the COVID-19 pandemic. The research location is the primary referral center hospital in Riau. This study used a questionnaire comprising statements regarding internal and external motivation. This research analysis is univariate and aims to explain or describe the characteristics of each research variable. Univariate analysis in this assessment was conducted on demographic data (Age, Gender, Last Education, and Length of Work).

RESULT

Table. 1
Respondents' Age and Length of Service

Characteristics	Min	Max	Range	Mean
Age	23	47	24	34,35
Length of Service	2	22	20	9,03

Based on Table 1, respondents are in the age range of 23 to 47 years, with an average age of 34.35 years. Meanwhile, in the length of work category, respondents were in the field of 2 to 22 years of work with an average size of result of 9.03 years.

Table. 2
Gender, Last Education, and Work Motivation

Characteristics	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	15	20,8
Female	57	79,2
Last Education		
D3 Nursing	26	36,1
S1 Nursing	21	29,2
NursingProfession	23	34,7
Work Motivation		
High	32	44,4
Low	40	55,6

The table above shows that most respondents are female, with as many as 57 respondents (79.2%), with the most recent education D3 Nursing as many as 26 people (36.1%). Most respondents in this study had low work motivation in providing nursing care during the COVID-19 pandemic, 40 respondents (55.6%).

DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that nurses' work motivation in providing nursing care during the COVID-19 pandemic is in a low category, as many as 55.6%. This is in line with the research of Şimşek et al. (2022) on the decline in nurses' work motivation during the COVID-19 pandemic. This decrease in motivation is related to changes in the flow of care and the use of PPE, which is used to protect patients or nurses. Still, in reality, nurses feel that the use of this PPE limits work activities, making it difficult for nurses to provide maximum care. In addition, the increasing amount of time nurses spend in the hospital and the lack of rest or time off negatively impact nurses' work motivation.

Other studies have also shown a decrease in nurses' work motivation in the COVID-19 special care room. The importance of the role of work agencies in increasing work motivation. Indicators of work motivation include safety at work, agency loyalty to employees, appreciation for work, and supportive working conditions (Mehdizadeh-Somarin et al., 2022). This study is inversely proportional to research conducted by Hasanah & Maharani (2022) where as many as 67.1% of nurses have good work motivation, and 32.9% are nurses with poor motivation during the COVID-19 pandemic. Research by Siregar et al., (2022) also states that nurses' reason for providing

care to patients is their duty to provide nursing care in any situation and make the COVID-19 pandemic a valuable experience.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a stressor for health workers. It causes annoyance, anger, denial, nervousness, anxiety, worry, helplessness, lack of motivation, fatigue, overwhelm, sadness, depression, difficulty sleeping, and difficulty concentrating in health workers (Centers for Disease Control and & Prevention, 2020). During the COVID-19 pandemic, health workers are the group most at risk of being affected because they work in a high-risk environment (Indonesian Ministry of Health, 2020). During the COVID-19 pandemic, nurses' responsibilities have changed and become more demanding as the number of patients requiring intensive care has increased. The shortage of nurses leads to extended shifts and is accompanied by deadly crisis conditions with unpredictable times and events, causing burnout and decreased motivation in nurses (Firouzkohui et al., 2022).

Inadequate work environment conditions and facilities and infrastructure, such as limited PPE and medical devices that support care actions, are also factors that cause a decrease in motivation in health workers (Reger et al., 2020). Changes in action procedures are carried out to protect health workers from the high risk of transmission. The use of PPE while treating patients in unique COVID-19 rooms is part of the procedure for health workers, which aims to protect health workers from the risk of coronavirus exposure (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2020). Health workers in patient care rooms are at high risk of exposure because they provide services to patients with suspected/probable/confirmed COVID-19 spread through aerosols (Indonesian Ministry of Health, 2020). Health workers urgently need to identify psychological problems and assess why they occur during the pandemic. This is done to overcome the decline in work motivation (Ekigen et al., 2023; Huang et al., 2020).

This study is not in line with research on the work motivation of health nurses in providing health services at the Kendari City Regional General Hospital (RSUD), which shows that nurses have a high reason, as much as 75.3% (58 people) (Hakman et al., 2020). Factors that influence the high and low work motivation of nurses, namely internal factors, which include personal maturity, education level, needs, fatigue, and boredom, while external factors, including environmental conditions, compensation, supervision, career, status and responsibility, and regulations in the agency where they work. The results of this study indicate that most respondents have the last education in D3 nursing, namely 26 people (36.1%). In line with Ariasti & Handayani's (2019) research on nurse work motivation at Gembolong Hospital, where nurses with D3 Nursing Education were the most respondents in their research (84.38%). Another study on nurses' work motivation during the COVID-19 pandemic at Mintoharjo Hospital also found that nurses with D3 education were 69 (67%) (Raya & Hendrawan, 2022).

Nurses' work motivation in carrying out nursing care is influenced by support from the hospital, such as appreciation and welfare. Encouragement and reinforcement from coworkers also bring happiness and enthusiasm in dealing with pandemic situations. Patients and families who cooperate in the care process are also factors that influence nurses' motivation. Nurses need various support from all parties in carrying out nursing care to break the COVID-19 chain (Siregar et al., 2022).

The results of the research are based on age in this study, with an average age of 34.35; this age is included in the adult age category (20-60 years) in the early adult category range (26-35 years) based on the Indonesian Ministry of Health in 2009. This study is in line with the research of Hasanah & Maharani (2022), which shows that

young adults are the most significant majority in their study. Research by Firouzkohui et al., (2022) also showed that participants were at an adult age of 32.5 years. Nurses who are in the young category need guidance in carrying out nursing services. In contrast, nurses who are in the older category have responsibility for their work because they are more experienced and responsive (Putri & Rizal, 2020). Another study by Hikmawati et al., (2022) showed that most nurses' ages were in the age range of 31-40 years, as many as 51.5%. Mehdizadeh-Somarin et al. (2022) stated that workers with older generations have more experience and training than younger coworkers.

Based on the gender category, the results of this study show that 79.2% of nurses are female. This result is in line with the research of Raya & Hendrawan (2022) with the results of 63.1% female respondents. A study revealed that nurses are synonymous with work done by women because it requires maternal instincts that can care with compassion and patience (Thahir & Laela, 2018). Research by Shacham et al., (2020) also explained that fear of contracting COVID-19, one of the causes of psychological distress in health workers and gender (female) affects 1.331 times experience distress, and being married affects 0.345 times to experience pain. Personality is a role that affects the response between men and women when facing a crisis. Women have personalities that are more negatively alert to stimuli, which triggers harmful hormones that lead to stress, anxiety, and fear. Another study also revealed that 59.9% of respondents were women with a large-scale fear of COVID-19, a desire to leave work, and work stress (Ekigen et al., 2023).

The research results on the length of work category in this study, respondents were in the range of 2 to 22 years, with an average size of work of 9.03 years. This aligns with the results of Hasanah & Maharini's research (2022) where the most work period is less than 12 years, as many as 65.7%. Mehdizadeh-Somarin et al., (2022) revealed that previous experiences influence an individual's ability to deal with unpleasant situations. This resilience plays a vital role in nurses' work motivation. In addition, the length of work affects a person's perspective and response in dealing with situations. The size of work in this study did not affect work motivation. Low work motivation in this study could occur due to the conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic, which occurred suddenly and without careful preparation. This incident caused burnout in health workers. This was also found in the results of research conducted by Liu et al., (2020) where healthcare providers work in a completely new context; health workers experience physical and psychological fatigue due to heavy workloads and problems using PPE. In addition, Ekigen et al., (2023) found that nurses working in intensive care with high weekly working hours wanted to move or quit. In addition, nurses with less work experience are more fearful and experience various concerns in carrying out nursing services.

Health organizations should reconsider efforts to handle crises or catastrophes such as pandemics by preparing human resources through training, providing psychological assistance services for health workers involved, and providing support tools in dealing with these situations (Mehdizadeh-Somarin et al., 2022).

CONCLUSIONS

Most of the respondents in this study had low work motivation in providing nursing care during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is necessary to mitigate the long-term effects for nurses against future pandemic events. Good explanation from health workers can maintain and even improve health, especially in nursing care services.

SUGGESTIONS

The description of nurses' motivation in nursing services during the COVID-19 period should need to be studied from the beginning by the agency where they work; this is done to identify needs in supporting nursing services, as well as maintaining the quality of nursing services during the COVID-19 period so that nursing services during the COVID-19 period remain effective, optimal as expected.

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