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Quality of nursing work life and job stress among nurses working in inpatient units

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Abstract

Background: *Quality of Nursing Work Life (QNWL)* plays an important role in maintaining nurses' performance in the quality of health services. If QNWL is low, this can increase job stress, thereby reducing the quality of care and nurses' performance.

Purpose: To determine the relationship between quality of nursing work life and job stress among inpatient nurses.

Method: A quantitative study. The design was analytical with cross sectional, the research sample consisted of 43 nursing inpatients at Arafah Islamic Hospital, Jambi City. Data was collected using a validated questionnaire. Data analysis included univariate analysis, normality test with Shapiro-wilk, and bivariate analysis with spearman rank correlation.

Results: Based on the results of the Spearman rho statistical test, it shows that the overall sub-variables of quality of nursing work life and job stress have a significant relationship with a p-value (<0.05).

Conclusion: It is important for nurses to maintain a balance in the quality of their work in healthcare services. A good quality of nursing work life will result in maximum improvement in work quality. The better the quality of nursing work life, the lower the level of job stress experienced.

Keywords: Healthcare Service; Inpatient; Job Stress; Nurses; Quality of Nursing Work Life.

INTRODUCTION

Hospitals are healthcare institutions that play a crucial role in supporting various health initiatives. They employ medical professionals who perform their duties based on their respective areas of expertise. Hospitals are institutions that provide healthcare services and play a vital role in supporting various health initiatives. Within them are medical experts who carry out their duties based on their respective expertise (American Association of Occupational Health Nurses, 2020). Among these medical personnel, nurses are the most dominant group in providing health services. Nursing services themselves are an integral part of hospital service

management. Therefore, it is essential for nurses to provide quality nursing services. Situations where the work environment is unsupportive, workplace conditions are inadequate, and workloads are excessive can hinder the process of professional service in the health sector (Angraini, 2024). The quality of services provided and the opportunities for growth available to nurses are determined by the Quality of Nursing Work Life (QNWL). Quality of nursing work life (QNWL) is a very important factor for nurses that affects the quality of services in the health sector. Dissatisfaction with the quality of work life can have an impact that affects the quality of nursing care and can endanger patient safety. Good

quality of nursing work can be achieved if there is a balance between work activities and the personal life aspects of nurses. Conversely, poor work quality can cause increased stress, which can affect the stability of hospital management. Quality of nursing work life is defined as the level of satisfaction of nursing staff regarding personal life aspects, which includes opportunities for growth and stress reduction (Rohmayanti & Wijayanti, 2023).

QNWL is closely related to the degree of satisfaction of nursing staff regarding their personal lives, which includes opportunities for growth. The quality of nurses' work life is influenced by four indicators (Haroen, Juniarti, Sari, Prista Sari, Arovah, Pardosi, & Wibowo, 2025). One of them is work life-home life, which describes how the demands of nursing work interact with and impact their personal lives at home (Lombardo, 2025). The work design indicator covers the structure and characteristics of nursing work, including how their tasks are organized and an overview of the activities they perform. The work context indicator relates to the work environment, and the work context indicator, which covers various aspects of social environment factors, such as public perception or views (Ratnaningsih, Sumarni, & Siwi, 2023). Good and balanced work-life quality will result in optimal work quality improvement, but if nurses experience stress related to their work-life quality, it will have serious consequences. The conditions experienced by nurses when there is no work-life balance will have a negative impact on their motivation to work. To be able to provide optimal work quality, nurses need to feel happy. Therefore, work-life balance must be considered to support nurses in working to their full potential. Work-life balance can also be affected by nurses' job stress. When nurses feel stressed, they often experience three types of stress-related problems, namely physical, psychological, and emotional. In this context, when nurses face pressure from various situations, whether from internal or external factors in the work environment, these conditions can trigger an increase in job stress levels (Madzudzo, 2021).

Data from the American National Association for Occupational Health reveals that based on forty cases of job stress, job stress among nurses ranks

highest, and they are also prone to minor psychological problems and depression. The Indonesian National Nurses Association (PPNI) states that 50.9% of nurses in Indonesia experience work-related stress, often suffering from headaches, fatigue, unfriendliness, lack of rest due to excessive workloads, and inadequate income (Kolahdooz, Jang, Deck, Ilkiw, Omoro, Rautio, & Sharma, 2024). This shows that the stress experienced by nurses is triggered by various causes, including working conditions and tasks that are too heavy, both physically and mentally. Mild job stress is more commonly felt by nurses in Konawe Kepulauan Regency, which is thought to be influenced by their length of service, with the majority having between 1 and 5 years of experience. Nurses who experience mild stress occasionally experience sudden migraines, sleep disorders, digestive problems in the stomach and intestines, joint pain, sudden anxiety, decreased appetite, increased sensitivity, easy loss of hope, and not wanting to work. Work-life balance and job stress that arise simultaneously have a positive impact on the quality of nurses' work. These findings show that an increase in work-life balance and job stress can improve the quality of nurses' work, while a decrease in work-life balance and job stress actually weakens their work quality (Kurniati & Efendi, 2023). Work-life balance refers to the capacity of nurses to balance the demands of work with their personal lives. Nurses who have optimal work-life balance are generally in a more stable psychological state, experience lower levels of fatigue, and have greater job satisfaction. Conversely, a lack of harmony between work and personal life, heavy workloads, long working hours, and pressure in the work environment can trigger excessive job stress (Murray & Matchulat, 2025).

RESEARCH METHOD

The research design applied was quantitative with a cross-sectional design, which is a form of research that emphasizes the assessment and control of data on independent and dependent variables in a specific period. This research will be conducted in November 2025 at the Arafah Islamic Hospital in Jambi. The entire subject population in this study includes 43 nurses working in the Safa,

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Mawa, Mina, and Raudah units. The sampling method applied is total sampling, in which all members of the population are designated as research samples. The total sampling technique was chosen by the researcher because the population of nurses who were the subjects of the study was relatively small, namely 43 people.

The main instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire that had undergone validation and reliability testing. This instrument used references from the Brooks & Anderson questionnaire in 2005 on quality of work life, as well used references DASS questionnaire designed by Lovibond S.H and

Lovibond P.F in 1995 on the of work stress. This questionnaire is scored using a 4-point Likert scale. The stages of statistical data analysis include: Univariate Analysis, which is used to describe the characteristics of each variable and identify the frequency of each variable, as well as normality testing: Using the Shapiro-Wilk test to analyze data distribution. In the normality test, it was found that the data was not normally distributed, so this study applied nonparametric statistical testing. Bivariate analysis was used to examine whether or not there was a relationship between the two variables.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents (N=43)

Variable	Results
Age (Mean±SD)(Range)(Years)(n/%)	(30.5±0.3)(26-35)
26-35	42/97.7
30-35	1/2.3
Gender (n/%)	
Male	7/16.3
Female	36/83.7
Length of employment (n/%)	
<1 year	0/0.0
≥1 year	43/100.0
Level of Education (n/%)	
D3	13/30.2
Bachelor's Degree + Nurse	30/69.8
Marital Status (n/%)	
Unmarried	13/30.2
Married	30/69.8
Quality of Nursing Work Life (n/%)	
Good	23/53.5
Fair	20/46.5
Poor	0/0.0
Job stress (n/%)	
Mild	26/60.5
Moderate	17/39.5
Heavy	0/0.0

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This table presents the demographic characteristics and work-related variables of the respondents. The average age was 30.5 ± 0.3 years (range 26–35 years). Most respondents were female (83.7%), had a length of employment of at least one year (100%), and held a bachelor's degree plus professional nursing qualification (69.8%). The majority were married (69.8%), reported a good quality of nursing work life (53.5%), and experienced mild job stress (60.5%).

Table 2. Relationship between Quality of Nursing Work Life and Work Stress among Nurses

QNWL	Work Stres			<i>p-value</i>
	Mild	Moderate	Heavy	
Good	23/53.5	00/00.0	00/00.0	0.000
Sufficient	3/7.0	17/39.5	00/00.0	
Insufficient	00/00.0	00/00.0	00/00.0	

Total 43 respondents, the results of Spearman's correlation analysis showed that there was a significant relationship with a correlation coefficient between Quality of Nursing Work Life and work stress of $r = -0.986$ with a significance value of $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$). These results indicate that there is a very strong and statistically significant relationship between Quality of Nursing Work Life and work stress. The negative direction of the relationship indicates that the better the Quality of Nursing Work Life, the lower the level of work stress experienced, and vice versa. A p -value of 0.000 was obtained, which is less than 0.05. This result indicates that the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted and (H_0) is rejected, showing that there is a significant relationship between the quality of nursing work life and work stress among nurses.

DISCUSSION

The Spearman Rank correlation test results show a value of $r = -0.986$ with a p -value = 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). This indicates that there is a very strong and significant negative relationship between the Quality of Nursing Work Life and the work stress of inpatient nurses at Arafah Islamic Hospital in Jambi. This means that the better the quality of nurses' work life, the lower the level of work stress they experience. In the context of this study, the quality of nurses' work in the good category is associated with work stress

conditions that are mostly in the mild category. Work environment support, role clarity, work-life balance, and recognition of the nursing profession play a role in reducing the occurrence of more severe work stress. Thus, the results of this study indicate that good work life quality can reduce and prevent an increase in the level of work stress among nurses, so that most work stress is in the mild category.

This study relates to Robert Karasek and Töres Theorell's theory (The Job-Demand-Control-Support model theory), which states that work stress occurs when there is an imbalance between job demands and the control that workers have over their work. When job demands are high and workers' control over their work is low, stress levels will increase significantly. (Karasek, R & Theorell, T, 1990)

This study is in line with research conducted by Fauzi in 2018 entitled "The Relationship Between Work-Life Balance and Work Stress in Female Nurses," which found $p=0.000$ ($p<0.05$) and a coefficient (r) of -0.599. This relationship shows that perceived work stress decreases as work-life balance increases. The results indicate that work-life balance is related to work stress among female nurses working at Hospital X in Surakarta. Nurses with high work-life balance have low work stress, and vice versa. Nurses with good work-life balance are able to manage their personal affairs so that they do not interfere with their work, allowing them to perform their jobs more effectively and purposefully without worrying about matters outside of work that cause work stress. (Fauzi, 2018)

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Based on the results of this study, researchers assume that the higher the Quality of Nursing Work Life (QNWL), the lower the work stress experienced by nurses. A very strong and significant negative relationship shows that when nurses experience an optimal quality of work life characterized by a supportive work environment, clarity of roles and responsibilities, a balance between work and personal life, and recognition of the profession, their ability to manage work demands improves. These conditions enable inpatient nurses to perform their duties more comfortably, in a controlled and professional manner, so that work stress tends to be at a low level. Therefore, the researchers conclude that improving the quality of nurses' work life is an important strategy that can be implemented by hospital management to reduce work stress levels, maintain the well-being of nurses, and support optimal nursing service quality.

CONCLUSION

This study has several limitations, including a sample limited to nurses at Arafah Islamic Hospital in Jambi, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Therefore, further research with a larger sample and from various hospitals in other regions is recommended to obtain more representative results. Additionally, a more comprehensive research design, such as a longitudinal study, could provide deeper insights into the long-term relationship between QNWL and nurses' job stress.

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