

## Professionalism And Performance of Nursing Staffs in Fight Against the Outbreak of Pandemic

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### ABSTRACT

Nursing staff's professionalism is crucial for optimal performance in healthcare, especially during pandemics, ensuring effective patient care and safety. The objective of this paper is to assess the nursing staff's effectiveness and professionalism in the fight against pandemic epidemics. In this regard, a sample size of 214 out 480 nursing staff was surveyed in this research. The study's findings have demonstrated the clear influence that honesty has on customer satisfaction, and that positive comments can inspire nurses to improve patient outcomes.

**Keywords:** Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, psychological support, Work-motivation

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## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Providing comprehensive care for all patients, including those affected by outbreak such as COVID-19, nurses play a critical role in the healthcare system. They are essential for handling several infections at once, decontaminating areas, and providing emergency care (Rosa et al., 2020). In order to manage situations including clinical treatment, decontamination, isolation, communication, screening, psychological support, and palliative care, nurses need to be well-prepared (Khademi et al., 2023). In order to ensure the wellbeing of

patients and their families, they must also be able to manage family members and increase the scope of care services.

### 1.2 Problem Statement

During the pandemic, nursing staff faced numerous challenges, including burnout, inadequate protective measures, emotional strain, insufficient training, communication gaps, resource shortages, and evolving guidelines (González-Nuevo et al., 2023). These issues can lead to increased infection risks, emotional strain, and compromised effectiveness of infectious disease management, highlighting the need for improved training and communication. However, insufficient training and the lack of

the resources is highlighted as the main challenges in this context (Rangachari et al., 2020). This also hampered their working environment which affected their performance in their daily services.

### 1.3 Research Aim and Objectives

The aim of the study is to evaluate the professionalism and the performance of the nursing staff in order to fight against the pandemic outbreaks.

**RO1:** To analyse the importance of quality work standards in customer satisfaction.

**RO2:** To analyse the role of honesty in customer satisfaction.

**RO3:** To analyse the role of integrity in customer satisfaction.

**RO4:** To investigate the advantages of feedback in customer satisfaction.

### 1.4 Research Questions

**RQ1:** How does the quality work standard affect customer satisfaction?

**RQ2:** What is the role of honesty in customer satisfaction?

**RQ3:** What is the role of integrity in customer satisfaction?

**RQ4:** What are the advantages of feedback in customer satisfaction?

### 1.5 Scope and Significance of the Study

This study examines the vital role that healthcare workers play in containing pandemics, highlighting their effectiveness and

professionalism (Magalhães et al., 2021). Examining their contributions helps readers better understand the ways to respond to medical emergencies (Zhang et al., 2021). The importance is in maximising nursing practices, which enhances public health outcomes and pandemic management in general.

## 2 Literature Review

### 2.1 Theoretical Underpinning (*The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model*)

Job resource demand theory or framework is used to explore the job resources and demands or positives contribute towards influencing employee well-being and workplace stress (Bakker et al., 2023). The framework proposes a major level of job demands like - workloads, hard deadlines, toxic workplace, and increased responsibilities causes low morale, sickness, unrest, emotional distress, and negativity (Buheji et al., 2020). It recommends job equipment like development and growth advantages, assistance from the management, positive work-life balance, and work recognition (Tummers et al., 2021). Organisations use this type of framework to select stressors over the workplace, and understand the way these factors affect results (Zhang et al., 2021). As per these theory concepts, lower positives and increased job demands can cause staff to experience major stress stages (Demerouti et al., 2023). The companies that use job positives to support to develop the employees mental and physical well-being can increase the job morale, productivity, and overall customers satisfaction outcomes.

## 2.2 Definition of the Variables

**Customer satisfaction** is a measurement of the rate of customer's happiness or how much the customers are satisfied with any specific company capabilities, services, and products (Hamzah et al., 2020).

**Quality work standards** are the elements that are the reasons to execute quality work, like - effectiveness, efficiency, and accuracy.

**Honesty** is basically the quality of being honest or truthful.

**Integrity** is the quality of steadfast address towards the ethical code or strict moral.

**Feedback** is basically the observation of the receiver's response towards the senders.

**Employee motivation** is the level of creativity, energy, and commitment of the organisation employees towards their jobs.

## 2.3 Conceptual Framework

DV- Customer satisfaction

IV - Quality work standards, Honesty, Integrity, Feedback

MV- Employee motivation

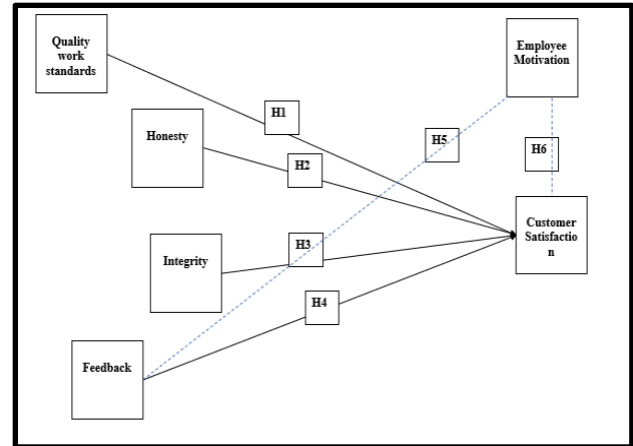


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

## 2.4 Hypotheses Development

### H1: Quality work standards significantly impacts Customer satisfaction

Quality work standards are very important over the hospitals or medical organisations to maintain customer satisfaction because it directly affects the success of the organisation (Nguyen, 2022) (Ali et al., 2021). Effective or quality work standards help the organisations and the employees like nursing staffs to execute all the operations with meeting the customers' requirements (Teixeira, 2020) (Asnawi et al., 2020). It helps to select work quality measures for each project or task (Hui-ren et al., 2023). It helps to select effective planning against individual tasks and assign deliverables or goals towards nursing staff (Ali et al., 2021) (Li et al., 2021). It helps to create a quality work environment and positive environment for the customers or patients (Gajewska et al., 2020) (Zhang et al., 2020). Similarly, it also helps to measure the quality of work provided by nursing staff against the organisation's customer satisfaction goals.

**H2: Honesty significantly impacts Customer satisfaction**

Honesty is a crucial factor over professionalism and performance among the nursing staff. It helps the hospital employees like nursing staff to create strong bonds with the patients or clients and customers (Asnawi et al., 2020) (Wulandari, 2022). It supports each of the nurses to develop their overall productivity and execute more success as a group representing their medical institution or organisation (Elizar et al., 2020) (Khatoon, Zhengliang & Hussain, 2020). A major factor of honesty is trust, which represents values that help the nursing staff to present their trustworthiness towards their organisation and patients by executing activities as per specific customer requirements and specific deadlines (Bungatang & Reynal, 2021) (Sinurat et al., 2021). Another major characteristic of honesty is reliability where the reliable nursing staff make sure that they meet all the organisation goals and help to develop their organisation culture by promoting customer satisfaction (Muschitiello et al., 2024).

**H3: Integrity significantly impacts Customer satisfaction**

Integrity is a major factor among the employees to achieve high rates of customer satisfaction. Major characteristics of integrity, like - responsibility is where responsible team members help other team members to meet their task goals (Febrian et al., 2021). Additionally, responsible nursing staff address issues during the patient treatment process and share important information related to the patient's treatment with the leaders or doctors (Elizar et al., 2020) (Dhingra, Gupta & Bhatt,

2020). Similarly, integrity in nursing staffs help them to develop their leadership abilities to support other staff or team members to achieve customer satisfaction goals (Jeong et al., 2022) (Tran & Le, 2020). Integrity among the nursing staff helps them to create a positive customer cooperating culture where they influence diversity and use ethical decision making on different tasks (Park et al., 2021).

**H4: Feedback significantly impacts Customer satisfaction**

Feedback plays a crucial role for helping employees achieve customer satisfaction targets (op 't Hoog et al., 2024). It helps the nursing staff to retain customers, attract more customers and generate more revenue for the organisation (Gajewska et al., 2020) (Basalamah & As'ad, 2021). Additionally, seeking customer feedback can help the nursing staff to present that the organisation values their customers. Customer feedback was acquired by the nursing staff to improve their professionalism and performance outcomes (Al-Omari et al., 2020) (Gunawan, 2022). It helps the nursing staff to provide services according to customer requirements and acquire high levels of customer satisfaction rates (Goniewicz et al., 2023).

**H5: Feedback significantly impacts Employee motivation**

Customer feedback presents a reflection of employees' performance outcomes. Customer feedback motivates nursing staff to execute objectives and organisation goals (Paais, Maartje & Pattiruhu, 2020) (Hasyim & Ali, 2022). It can also support the nursing staff to understand effectively their

weaknesses and strengths over their performance, which motivates them to develop their progress to execute better results (Ali et al., 2021) (Ilyas et al., 2020). It motivates each of the nursing staff to develop their skills and knowledge for executing more goals over there work and present their best themselves (Zhou et al., 2021) (Smith-Renner et al., 2020).

#### **H6: Employee motivation mediates the relation between Feedback and Customer satisfaction**

Feedback helps the nursing staff to identify their performance indicators, which help them to understand their performance towards achieving organisational customer satisfaction goals (Riyanto et al., 2021) (Kurdi et al., 2020). Basically, feedback helps the employees by offering direction, developing individual performance, and encouraging engagement among them (Gawlik et al., 2024). It motivates the nursing staff to work according to the customer requirements and execute customer satisfaction targets.

#### **2.5 Literature Gap**

Over the upper mentioned literature most of the authors discussed different problems related towards the “Professionalism and performance of nursing staffs in fight against the outbreak of pandemic”. However, none of the literature critically analysed the challenge of insufficient training and the lack of the resources among nursing staff during the pandemic. Therefore, it was identified as the literature gap in this research study.

### **3 Research Methodology**

#### **3.1 Research Framework**

The research philosophy considered for this study was the positivism philosophy. The use of this allows a researcher to conduct study about the information derived from the concepts of a study (Park et al., 2020). The use of this philosophy ensures numerical interpretation of the different concepts related to the concepts that impact the performance of the nurses in the post-COVID outbreak period (Jiang et al., 2021).

The deductive research approach has been used for the study to have a structured format to carry the study (Casula et al., 2021). The current study began with the theoretical understanding of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model and the same is used for conducting statistical tests on the different concepts related to the performance of the nurses in the recent years post-COVID (Mahdavi et al., 2023).

The current study has used the descriptive research design for the answering of the different research questions which were of “*what*”, “*when*”, “*how*” and “*where*” types.

#### **3.2 Data Collection**

The data for the current study is collected as **primary data**. The advantage of using this data collection method is that the most updated data is collected from first-hand sources (Franzitta et al., 2020). The current study has used the survey method for the collection of the data for the study. The study has collected data from the nurses who have been working in the different healthcare facilities. The interpretation of the same

.950

.953

36

primary data can help understand what factors have impacted the performances of these nurses in the post COVID period (Kosiyaporn et al., 2020). The accuracy of collecting the primary data is the most due to the numerical interpretation that can be conducted on the same collected data (Kok et al., 2022).

### 3.3 Research Instrument

The current study has chosen the survey questionnaire to collect the primary data from the participants (Sun et al., 2023). A survey questionnaire firstly consists of the demographic information of the respondents which can include aspects such as age, gender, work experience and more (Shrestha, 2021). This questionnaire used for the study had answers in form of 5-point Likert scale with responses as **“strongly agree”, “agree”, “neutral”, “disagree” and “strongly disagree”**. The use of the survey questionnaire ensures the collection of the primary data from the chosen sample respondents through simple questions which are related to the performance of the nurses in the post-COVID era.

### 3.4 Sampling and Population

Population for quantitative research is the collection of all the individuals or groups

of individuals or organisations who are impacted by the conducting of the study (Huang et al., 2022). In cases when the population is very large, a smaller portion of the entire population is chosen to collect the relevant data for the study. For the current study, the Krejcie and Morgan table has been used for determining the sample size for the current

study (Kharuddin et al., 2020). It has been decided to collect data from a **sample of 214 out of 480 nurses** who work in the private Healthcare facilities in Malaysia. Random sampling has further helped to determine which nurses working in these private healthcare facilities can become the sample members.

### 3.5 Data Analysis

The interpretation of the collected data for the study helps drawing conclusions related to the study findings. The current study has used the IBM SPSS software for the interpretation of the collected data (Sen et al., 2022). The different statistical tests that have been conducted for the collected data include the demographics, central tendencies, regression tests, reliability test and more (Borzuchowska et al., 2023). The presence of the mediating variable in the current study has also necessitated the use of the SOBEL test for the understanding of the mediating impact of the same on the other variables.

### 3.6 Ethical Considerations

The use of the **Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA), Malaysia, 2010** has ensured that the data has been collected with complete consent of each of the participants. The use of this ethical consideration has also ensured that the data collected is solely used for the purpose of the study.

## 4. Results and Findings

### 4.1 Demographic Analysis

		Count	Column N %
Age	21-26 years	65	30.4%
	27-32 years	115	53.7%
	More than 32 years	34	15.9%
Gender	Male	40	18.7%
	Female	164	76.6%
	Others	10	4.7%
Profession	1-3 years	49	22.9%
	3-5 years	139	65.0%
	More than 5 years	26	12.1%

**Table 1: Demographic Analysis**

Based on the demographic information it is highlighted that the majority of the responses are obtained from the '27-32 years' age group. This also highlighted that more than half (53.7%) of the respondents belonged to this age group highlighting 115 out of 214 respondents. This indicated the results are based on the middle generation involved in this research. In addition to this, the above table also highlighted the majority of the respondents are obtained from the female respondents. This

categorical option obtained 76.6% of the whole respondents highlighting 164 out of 214 respondents. This indicated the outcome of the research is based on the female perspective and might be biased by their point of view. Moreover, the majority of the respondents involved in this research have professional experiences of '3-5 years. In this regard, 139 out of 214 respondents highlighted 65% of the overall respondents involved in this group.

#### 4.2 Reliability Test

**Table 2: Reliability Analysis**

The obtained value of the Cronbach Alpha in this research is 0.950. It can be observed that the value obtained stays in the required Cronbach Alpha value for any

research, this also indicates the questionnaire developed for this research is reliable and consistent and can be utilised for further research.

#### 4.3 Multiple Linear Regression Test

The study finds partial support for the first independent variable, Quality Work Standards (QWS2, QWS3, QWS4), as only three out of six constructs show significant p-values. Similarly, the second variable, Honesty (H4, H5, H6), and the third variable, Integrity (I2, I3, I5), both exhibit partial support with three

significant constructs each out of six. The fourth variable, Feedback (F1, F2, F4), also partially supports the research, as only three out of six constructs have significant p-values (Zandian et al., 2021). The mediating variable, Employee Motivation (EM4, EM5), shows partial support with two significant constructs out of six.

**4.4 Sobel Test**

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error				Beta	Lower Bound
1	(Constant)	1.714	.234		7.335	.000	1.254	2.175
	F1	.381	.075	.330	5.090	.000	.233	.528

a. Dependent Variable: EM4

**Table 3: Multiple Linear Regression Test between Feedback and Employee Motivation**

The above table highlighted regression analysis between independent variable (Feedback) and mediating variable (Employee Motivation) taking mediating variable as

dependent variable. The table displayed the obtained significant t-value (t.) for Feedback (F1) and Employee Motivation (EM4) is 5.090.

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error				Beta	Lower Bound
1	(Constant)	.437	.077		5.697	.000	.286	.588
	EM4	.874	.025	.923	34.867	.000	.825	.924

a. Dependent Variable: CS1



**Table 4: Multiple Linear Regression Test between Employee Motivation and Customer Satisfaction**

The above table highlighted regression analysis between mediating variable (Employee Motivation) and dependent variable (Customer Satisfaction) taking mediating variable as

independent variable. The table displayed the obtained significant t-value ( $t_c$ ) for Employee Motivation (EM4) Customer Satisfaction (CS1) is 34.867.

#### Sobel Test between Feedback, Employee Motivation and Customer Satisfaction

Input:		Test statistic:	p-value:
$t_a$	5.090	Sobel test:	5.03661496
$t_b$	34.867	Aroian test:	5.03458793
		Goodman test:	5.03864443
			4.7e-7
			4.8e-7
			4.7e-7
		Reset all	Calculate

**Figure 2: Sobel Test between Feedback, Employee Motivation and Customer Satisfaction**

The above figure displayed, by conducting Sobel test through Sobel Test calculator, the Sobel test value obtained is 5.0366. This obtained value is more than the 1.96, which is a required value to display the mediating effect. Hence, this indicates the mediating variable has a mediating effect in the relationship with the dependent variable.

## 5. Conclusion

### 5.1 Linking with the Objectives

***RO1: To analyse the importance of quality work standards in customer satisfaction.***

This objective has been tested and it is clear that the work standards in the healthcare profession can greatly impact customer (patient) satisfaction.

***RO2: To analyse the role of honesty in customer satisfaction.***

The findings have also suggested that if the nurses are honest towards their patients, then the customers tend to feel more confident with the treatment.

***RO3: To analyse the role of integrity in customer satisfaction.***

The results of the study have shown that integrity has definite impact on the

customer satisfaction as it entails more customers to reach out for health-related help when the integrity of the healthcare institution and the professionals there are ensured.

**RO4: To investigate the advantages of feedback in customer satisfaction.**

The findings have finally shown that feedback is likely to motivate the nurses to work better towards the healthcare outcomes.

### 5.2 Implications

This study can be used effectively to utilise different **work-motivation related theories** into practical applications. The findings of the study can be used for understanding the different external factors which can disrupt the work stress for the nurses in different healthcare settings.

### 5.3 Recommendations

The study implicated that the nurses in the different healthcare settings can be put into a more flexible schedule of work so that they feel less stressed with the work. The healthcare authorities can also implement different strategies to help the nurses feel motivated during their work.

### 5.4 Limitations and Future Scope

The nurses of all the hospitals and healthcare settings could not be considered for the sample as there was a definite time constraint. In the future, more factors like the organisational culture, or work experience would be considered to get more understanding of how nurses can stay more motivated to work better in the healthcare settings.

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