



# SIGn JOURNAL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

[ E-ISSN: 2962-3723 ] [ P-ISSN: 2962-4347 ]

<https://jurnal.penerbitsign.com/index.php/sjph/article/view/v4n1-001>

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Vol. 4 Issue 1: January – June 2025

Published Online: June 23, 2025

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## Article Title

### **The Influence of Work Motivation on the Performance of Clinical Nurses at the Regional Public Hospital (RPH) Haji Makassar**

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## How to cite:

Fitri, A. U., Ariani, N. W., & Fitriani, D. A. (2025). The Influence of Work Motivation on the Performance of Clinical Nurses at the Regional Public Hospital (RPH) Haji Makassar. *SIGn Journal of Public Health*, 4(1), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.37276/sjph.v4i1.660>

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## **ABSTRACT**

*In the dynamic post-pandemic healthcare landscape, RPH Haji Makassar faces the dual challenge of transitioning to electronic medical records and optimizing operational efficiency, as reflected by a Bed Occupancy Rate (BOR) that has yet to meet national standards. Although nurses play a central role as frontline providers, inefficiencies in care management are frequently observed, indicating the need for an in-depth evaluation of the psychological factors underlying clinical performance. This study aims to comprehensively analyze the effects of intrinsic and extrinsic work motivation on the performance of staff nurses in the inpatient wards of RPH Haji Makassar in 2025. This study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional design and involved 144 staff nurses as respondents, using a total sampling (census) technique. Primary data were collected using a validated, structured questionnaire, and analysis was conducted using a simple linear regression to test the hypothesis. Empirical findings revealed that the majority of nurses possessed a very high level of work motivation (93.75%), consistently accompanied by a high rate of performance achievement (94.44%). Statistical analysis confirmed a positive and significant effect of work motivation on nurse performance ( $p$ -value = 0.001;  $p < 0.05$ ), with the regression coefficient indicating that strengthening motivation directly contributes to improved service quality. The high motivation of nurses proved to be a primary pillar of service resilience amidst work pressure and the adaptation to new technology; however, a gap remains between excellent individual performance and macro-level organizational efficiency. Work motivation is a vital predictor of nurses' clinical performance. This study recommends managerial strategies that focus not only on financial incentives but also on strengthening psychosocial support and creating an adaptive work environment to align individual performance with the hospital's strategic goals.*

*Keywords:* Health Human Resources; Hospital Management; Inpatient Care; Nurse Performance; Work Motivation.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Current global dynamics necessitate fundamental transformations across the public sector, including healthcare institutions, which have a vital mandate to develop human capital. As comprehensive healthcare institutions, hospitals face the dual challenge of maintaining rigorous medical service standards while adapting to increasingly complex demands for managerial efficiency. Within this care ecosystem, nurses play a central role as frontline providers due to their continuous 24-hour interaction with patients (Al-Homayan et al., 2013; Zainaro et al., 2017). Consequently, the optimization of hospital functions depends not solely on physical infrastructure or medical technology but is largely determined by the performance quality of professional, competent nursing human resources oriented toward patient safety and satisfaction (Hermawati et al., 2022; Layli & Gurning, 2023).

Nurse performance, defined as the qualitative and quantitative work outcomes achieved in executing assigned responsibilities, is a crucial variable influenced by various internal and external factors. Previous literature consistently indicates that work motivation is a primary psychological determinant that drives productivity and the quality of nursing care (Ardyansah, 2020; Hasica et al., 2023). High motivation encourages nurses to go beyond merely completing administrative tasks, enabling

them to provide holistic care that accelerates patient recovery. Conversely, decreased motivation often correlates directly with reduced performance, manifesting as incomplete care documentation, delayed treatment, and an aggregate decline in hospital quality indicators (Rima et al., 2023; Wandami & Anhar, 2024).

Although theories regarding the relationship between motivation and performance have been extensively discussed, empirical phenomena at the Regional Public Hospital (RPH) Haji Makassar indicate a gap between ideal expectations and operational realities that requires further investigation. Based on internal medical records from 2021 to 2023, despite an upward trend in the number of inpatients, service efficiency indicators such as the Bed Occupancy Rate (BOR) and Average Length of Stay (AvLOS) have not met the efficiency standards established by the Indonesian Ministry of Health. In 2023, the BOR was recorded at 53.61%, below the ideal range of 60-85%, while the AvLOS was 3.35 days, also below the standard range of 6-9 days. The low achievement of these indicators suggests inefficiencies in inpatient care management, indirectly reflecting potential issues with the performance of the human resources involved.

This operational gap is further corroborated by preliminary observation findings that identified several technical and behavioral constraints hindering optimal nurse performance in the inpatient wards of RPH Haji Makassar. These issues include incomplete medical record documentation, barriers to using electronic medical record applications, and ineffective time management during shift handovers due to personnel shortages. Such a high-pressure work environment, as highlighted in post-pandemic global studies, can trigger persistent anxiety and emotional exhaustion among healthcare workers if not properly managed (Sartika & Fauziah, 2024). This psychological pressure not only increases mental workload but also has the potential to significantly degrade nurses' intrinsic motivation (Rosyidawati et al., 2020; Wau, 2022). When motivation is compromised by systemic, operational, and psychological burdens, nurse performance in delivering nursing care becomes suboptimal, ultimately contributing to the failure in achieving hospital quality indicator targets.

Previous research on nurse performance at RPH Haji Makassar was conducted by Basir et al. (2022) at a different time, specifically in 2020. Although their study also found motivation to be urgent in driving performance, the post-pandemic work environment and operational challenges, along with the recent implementation of health digitalization systems, create a significantly different context in 2025. Furthermore, similar studies conducted by Andri et al. (2021) at RPH Labuang Baji and Priyanti et al. (2024) at Siti Aisyah Islamic Hospital Madiun focused more on leadership and competency as accompanying variables. Differences in temporal context, internal regulatory changes regarding electronic medical records, and workload fluctuations, as reflected in the latest BOR data, make replicating this research at the same location

highly relevant for validating the consistency of motivation's effect on performance in the current situation.

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on analyzing the determinants of work motivation on nurse performance within a healthcare landscape transitioning toward full digitalization in 2025, a contextual variable that remains underexplored in previous studies at this location ([Hakman et al., 2021](#)). This research not only re-examines classical motivation theories but also contextualizes them within specific operational challenges, such as technological adaptation and workflow efficiency in inpatient wards. The originality of this study is further supported by the use of current primary data, combined with secondary data analysis of hospital performance (BOR and AvLOS), thereby providing a comprehensive overview of how individual motivation impacts institutional output at the macro level ([Senbetu et al., 2025](#)).

Based on the problem description and scientific justification outlined above, this study aims to quantitatively analyze the effect of work motivation on the performance of staff nurses in the inpatient wards of RPH Haji Makassar. This research is designed to empirically determine the extent to which motivational drives, both internal (e.g., the need for achievement) and external (e.g., the work environment) contribute to variability in nurse performance when delivering nursing care. By understanding these determinants, hospital management can formulate precise interventional strategies to enhance medical staff productivity.

Practically, the results of this study are expected to provide constructive contributions to the management of RPH Haji Makassar in formulating human resource development policies, particularly in designing non-financial incentive systems and motivation enhancement programs adapted to the challenges of service digitalization. Theoretically, this research aims to enrich the literature in Public Health and Nursing Management by providing additional empirical evidence regarding the consistency of performance motivation theories within the context of a regional public hospital undergoing service transformation.

## **METHOD**

This study employed a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional design ([Notoatmodjo, 2018](#)). The research was conducted at RPH Haji Makassar, a primary referral healthcare facility in South Sulawesi Province. Data collection occurred over three months, from January to March 2025. The study population comprised all actively working staff nurses in the inpatient wards of RPH Haji Makassar, totaling 144 individuals. Given the accessible population size, and to ensure high data representativeness while minimizing sampling error, a total sampling (census) technique was utilized, incorporating the entire population (n = 144) as respondents.

Data were collected from two main sources: primary and secondary data (Sugiyono, 2019). Primary data were obtained directly from the respondents using a structured questionnaire that had undergone validity and reliability testing. This instrument was designed to measure the dimensions of work motivation (need for achievement, affiliation, and power) and nurse performance (work quality, quantity, timeliness, and responsibility). Concurrently, secondary data were gathered through a document review of the hospital’s annual reports and personnel profiles. Data analysis was performed sequentially using SPSS statistical software (Dahlan, 2020). The initial phase involved univariate analysis to describe respondents’ characteristics and the frequency distributions of the research variables, providing a descriptive overview of demographic profiles (age, gender, education, and tenure) and levels of motivation and performance. The subsequent phase entailed bivariate analysis using the Simple Linear Regression test to evaluate the research hypotheses.

## RESULTS

### A. Univariate Analysis

Univariate analysis was conducted to provide a descriptive overview of the respondents’ demographic characteristics and the frequency distribution of the research variables, namely work motivation and nurse performance. Data were collected from 144 staff nurses in the inpatient wards of RPH Haji Makassar.

#### 1. Respondent Characteristics

The respondents’ demographic characteristics included gender, age, educational level, and tenure. The frequency distribution for each characteristic is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. Frequency Distribution of Respondents Based on Characteristics**

Characteristic	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	28	19.44
Female	116	80.56
Age		
20 – 25 years old	5	3.47
26 – 30 years old	24	16.67
31 – 35 years old	36	25.00
36 – 40 years old	38	26.39
> 40 years old	41	28.47

Characteristic	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Education		
Diploma III (D3) Nursing	40	27.78
Bachelor (S1) Nursing	104	72.22
Tenure		
< 2 years	7	4.86
≥ 2 years	137	95.14

Sources: Primary Data, 2025.

The majority of respondents in this study were female, comprising 116 individuals (80.56% of the total population), while male respondents accounted for 28 individuals (19.44%). This dominance of female nurses aligns with the global trend in the nursing profession, which is traditionally associated with caregiving and maternal traits, although the role of male nurses is becoming increasingly crucial in modern healthcare dynamics (Table 1).

The age distribution of nurses at RPH Haji Makassar was relatively even across the productive age range. The largest age group was nurses aged 40 or older, with 41 individuals (28.47%), followed by the 36 – 40 years age group, with 38 individuals (26.39%). This indicates that most nursing staff in the inpatient wards possessed a sufficient level of age maturity, which theoretically correlates with emotional maturity in handling workload (Table 1).

The majority of respondents held a Bachelor of Nursing degree, totaling 104 individuals (72.22%), whereas nurses with a Diploma in Nursing background accounted for 40 individuals (27.78%). The high proportion of nurses with bachelor’s or professional education serves as a crucial modality for the hospital in implementing evidence-based practice. Furthermore, almost all respondents, specifically 137 individuals (95.14%), had worked for 2 years or more at RPH Haji Makassar. Only 7 individuals (4.86%) had a tenure of less than 2 years. This extended tenure demonstrates a strong employee retention rate and a solid accumulation of clinical experience, both of which are expected to contribute positively to service performance stability (Table 1).

## 2. Research Variables

**Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Research Variables**

Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Motivation		
High	135	93.75
Low	9	6.25

Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Performance		
High	136	94.44
Low	8	5.56

Sources: Primary Data, 2025.

The measurement results in Table 2 showed that the work motivation level of nurses in the inpatient wards of RPH Haji Makassar was classified as excellent. A total of 135 respondents (93.75%) had high work motivation, while only 9 respondents (6.25%) had low motivation. This high figure reflects a strong internal drive among the majority of nurses to achieve, affiliate, and assume responsibility in their work. Consistent with the motivation data, the table showed that nurse performance was also highly satisfactory descriptively. A total of 136 nurses (94.44%) were assessed as high performers, whereas 8 nurses (5.56%) were assessed as low performers. These findings initially indicate alignment between high motivation and high-performance output.

## B. Bivariate Analysis

Bivariate analysis was conducted to prove the hypothesis regarding the influence of work motivation on nurse performance. The statistical test used was Simple Linear Regression. Before proceeding to the influence test, a cross-tabulation is presented to observe the data distribution pattern between variables.

**Table 3. Distribution of Respondents' Work Motivation by Nurse Performance in the Inpatient Wards of RPH Haji Makassar in 2025**

Research Variables	Performance				Total		p-value
	High		Low		n	%	
	n	%	n	%			
<b>Work Motivation</b>							0.037
<b>High</b>	132	91.67	3	2.08	135	100.00	
<b>Low</b>	4	2.78	5	3.47	9	100.00	

Sources: Primary Data, 2025.

Table 3 illustrates a notable relationship pattern between the variables. Among the 135 nurses with high motivation, 132 individuals (91.67% of the total population) also exhibited high performance. Conversely, within the group of nurses with low motivation (9 individuals), more than half (5 individuals) demonstrated low performance. This pattern supports the initial premise that motivation plays a determinant role in performance outcomes.

**Table 4. Simple Linear Regression Analysis of the Effect of Work Motivation on Nurse Performance in the Inpatient Wards at RPH Haji Makassar in 2025**

<b>Model</b>	<b>Regression Coefficient (B)</b>	<b>t-score</b>	<b>Sig. (p-value)</b>
Constant	16.304	5.383	0.001
Work Motivation	0.434	8.847	0.001

*Sources: Primary Data, 2025.*

Based on the statistical test results in Table 4, a constant of 16.304 was obtained, indicating that if work motivation is zero, nurse performance is 16.304. This value represents the baseline of nurse performance independent of work motivation. Furthermore, the regression coefficient of 0.434 indicates that a one-unit increase in work motivation is associated with a 0.434 increase in nurse performance. This positive regression coefficient indicates that work motivation is associated with higher nurse performance. Ultimately, the analysis yielded a significance value of 0.001 ( $p < 0.05$ ) and a t-value of 8.847 for the work motivation variable. Therefore, it can be concluded that the work motivation variable significantly affects the nurse performance variable.

## **DISCUSSION**

The primary findings of this study empirically confirm that work motivation plays a significant, positive role in staff nurses' performance in the inpatient wards of RPH Haji Makassar. Statistical analysis revealed that 93.75% of the nurses possessed a high level of motivation, which linearly correlated with a high-performance achievement of 94.44%. The positive regression coefficient indicates that any effort to enhance work motivation will directly improve the quality of nursing care provided to patients. This finding aligns with previous research conducted by [Basir et al. \(2022\)](#) at the same location in 2020, which also identified motivation as a strong predictor of nurse performance. The consistency of these results over five years (2020 – 2025) indicates that the human resource management at RPH Haji Makassar has successfully built a solid motivational foundation, despite facing rapid dynamics in healthcare system transformations. This is further supported by comparative studies at other public hospitals, as reported by [Zainaro et al. \(2017\)](#) at RPH Alimuddin Umar Lampung and [Andri et al. \(2021\)](#) at RPH Labuang Baji, which concluded that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are key to maintaining the performance stability of healthcare workers in the public sector.

The high work motivation among nurses at RPH Haji Makassar can be explained by Herzberg's two-factor theory, in which motivator factors (such as recognition, responsibility, and achievement) and hygiene factors (such as working conditions and

interpersonal relationships) appear to be well-fulfilled. Demographic data indicate that the majority of nurses hold a Bachelor of Nursing degree (72.22%) and have tenure of over 2 years (95.14%), which, theoretically, contribute to professional maturity and a high need for self-actualization (Hasica et al., 2023; Layli & Gurning, 2023). This high motivation manifests in productive work behaviors, such as punctuality, completeness of care documentation, and responsiveness to patient needs. These findings reinforce the arguments of Ardyansah (2020) and Wandami and Anhar (2024), who stated that motivated nurses tend to exhibit a better service orientation and higher compliance with standard operating procedures (SOPs). Furthermore, Priyanti et al. (2024) added that competency supported by strong motivation generates a positive synergy for clinical performance, a phenomenon clearly evident within RPH Haji Makassar.

However, despite these positive statistical outcomes, a notable paradox emerges when cross-referenced with the hospital's secondary data. Although the nurses' self-perceived performance is exceptionally high, the Bed Occupancy Rate (BOR) of RPH Haji Makassar in 2023 remained at 53.61%, well below the national efficiency standard. This disparity suggests that high individual performance has not fully translated into macro-level organizational efficiency. Rosyidawati et al. (2020) highlighted in their study that disproportionate workloads and suboptimal management systems can act as bottlenecks, preventing individual performance from effectively impacting institutional output. In the context of RPH Haji Makassar, operational constraints such as the transition to electronic medical records and staff shortages during critical hours (shift handovers) may serve as latent factors that diminish the positive impact of nurse motivation. This aligns with the findings of Al-Homayan et al. (2013), who emphasized that high motivation without efficient system support can lead to long-term burnout and service inefficiency.

The importance of addressing nurses' psychological aspects and mental workload as part of motivational strategies is also a focal point of this discussion. Nurses at RPH Haji Makassar, having navigated the pandemic's crises, may carry residual psychological burden into their daily work. If left unmanaged, this pressure can gradually erode work motivation. Therefore, efforts to sustain motivation cannot rely solely on financial incentives but must also encompass psychosocial support and the creation of a conducive work environment (Rima et al., 2023). Rahman and Mas'ud (2022) and Sultan and Peristiowati (2023) noted that non-material rewards, such as supervisory support and a supportive work environment, are often more effective in sustaining long-term motivation than mere financial incentives.

A deeper analysis of the respondent characteristics reveals that the dominance of female nurses (80.56%) and the mature age group (> 36 years) creates a unique dynamic in motivation at RPH Haji Makassar. This group tends to have a higher need for affiliation and stability; thus, motivation approaches based on kinship and job

security become highly relevant (Wau, 2022). Conversely, the challenges of healthcare digitalization require high adaptability, which may constitute a distinct stressor for senior nurses. Hermawati et al. (2022) suggested the need for continuous competency development strategies to bridge this technological gap, ensuring that work motivation is not hindered by technical limitations. Consequently, performance improvement strategies at RPH Haji Makassar must be holistic, integrating reinforcement of intrinsic motivation with improvements to work systems and adequate technological support.

From a Global Health Workforce perspective, these findings also contribute to the literature on healthcare worker retention in developing countries. Senbetu et al. (2025), in their study in Ethiopia, found that intrinsic factors such as professional pride and work autonomy are primary drivers of performance in public hospitals. This strongly resonates with the conditions at RPH Haji Makassar, where nurses continue to demonstrate high dedication despite facing resource limitations. This phenomenon affirms that investing in the “psychological capital” of nurses is a cost-effective strategy for improving service quality. However, hospital management must not become complacent with the current high motivation. Regular monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are necessary to detect early signs of demotivation stemming from burnout or dissatisfaction with the compensation system, as Rima et al. (2023) warned in their research on the effects of discipline and compensation.

Overall, this study successfully demonstrates that work motivation is an indispensable key variable in managing nurse performance at RPH Haji Makassar. The significant and positive effect identified implies that any policy aimed at enhancing nurses’ psychological and professional well-being will yield a return on investment through improved service performance. Simultaneously, this finding refutes the assumption that nurse performance is solely determined by physical workload or salary; rather, it is heavily influenced by how they perceive their work and feel valued within their work environment. The synergy between high individual motivation and improvements in the hospital management system will serve as a primary catalyst in achieving minimum service standard targets, such as increasing the BOR and optimizing the AvLOS, ultimately culminating in enhanced patient satisfaction and safety (Hakman et al., 2021).

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

Based on the data analysis and discussion outlined, this study concludes that work motivation plays a crucial role in determining staff nurses’ performance in the inpatient wards of RPH Haji Makassar. Of the 144 respondents, 135 (93.75%) demonstrated a high level of work motivation, which aligns with the high nurse performance rate of 94.44%. Statistical analysis revealed a positive and significant

effect of work motivation on nurse performance, with the regression coefficient indicating that any increase in motivation directly contributes to the improved quality of nursing care services. These findings affirm the structural coherence of the study's logical framework, wherein the initial problem regarding the performance gap—indicated by the hospital's secondary data—is addressed by the research objective identifying motivation as a predictor variable, and is ultimately confirmed by the empirical conclusion that strengthening motivation is a strategic solution to overcome this issue. Although individual nurse performance is rated highly, the hospital's operational efficiency challenges, reflected by suboptimal bed occupancy indicators, suggest the need for better integration between individual motivation and the overall hospital management system.

Based on these conclusions, it is recommended that the management of RPH Haji Makassar focus not solely on providing financial incentives but also on strengthening non-material reward systems that address nurses' psychological needs. Human resource development policies should be directed toward creating a supportive work environment that is adaptive to technology, considering the increasingly urgent challenges of healthcare digitalization. Specifically, it is recommended to conduct regular training programs that enhance not only technical competencies but also soft skills and stress management, to maintain nurse motivation amid dynamic work pressures. For academics and future researchers, it is recommended to expand the scope of variables by incorporating transformational leadership and digital organizational culture as moderating variables, and to utilize mixed-methods further to investigate the psychological dynamics underlying nurse performance statistics. The implementation of these recommendations is expected to bridge the gap between high individual performance and organizational productivity, enabling RPH Haji Makassar to achieve sustainable comprehensive service standards.

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