Reviewer’s report

Title: "How do we use the time?” – an observational study measuring the task time distribution of nurses in psychiatric care

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Reviewer: Juan Leyva-Moral

Reviewer’s report:

ARTICLE REVIEW: How do we use the time?” - an observational study measuring the task time distribution of nurses in psychiatric care. Manuscript Number: NURS-D-19-00140

Thank you for giving me the chance to review this interesting research. The paper is well structured and scholarly written. I would be delighted to accept it for publication, but first consider the following comments and suggestions and make the required changes.

Title: clear and concise. It provides basic information to the reader to easily know about the topic, aim and methodology of the study

Abstract: well structured. No superficial information is provided. Some data about the data analysis method would benefit the abstract. When you say "administering medicine", do you mean "administering drugs or medication"? I would not say "It is a major area of concern that nurses …" in the conclusion, rather I would just conclude ” Nurses working in inpatient psychiatric care spend little time in direct contact with the patients and medication administration is interrupted very often".

Background:

Line 38. When you state "Studies focusing on psychiatric care are uncommon and often performed using differing methods (13)", do you mean using time motion? If so, you should state it because the sentence, by itself, can lead to multiple interpretations.

Line 44. What do you mean by "enough time"? Please explain

Line 63. When you state "was important and helpful for patients", I would ask you, in terms of what was it important? I would encourage you to add a paragraph in this section explaining the consequences of ineffective or missing communication between nurses and patients.

Line 66. Again, you say "partnership with the staff as important". I think it would benefit the argument if you explain why it was important

Line 103. When you say "however the amount of time spent with patients may be misleading as it is believed that only 4-20 % of that time contains anything of therapeutic value", does this argument comes from Sharac et al.? It is not clear

Line 110. I would change "was" to "were"
Methods:

Line 132. The sentence 2 Structured observations are useful when data concerning frequency, intensity or duration of activities are collected" needs to be referenced.

Line 137. How can you ensure that 12 nurses were enough to provide credible and transferrable results? I think more details about sampling procedures are needed.

Line 170. Why did Nine of the nurses were observed once, two nurses were observed twice and one nurse three times?

Line 207. You say "This analysis is presented by task category”. I think you could provide more details about this. How did you analyzed the data? Using descriptive analysis by means of percentages?

Results:

This section is clear, concise and easy to follow.

Discussion:

Line 267. The sentence "this result causes issues with quality of care" needs a reference.

Line 270. The sentence "Instead, in a time when person-centred care is being emphasized, psychiatric nurses in Sweden seems to move in the opposite direction" needs to be referenced. Or, if you are giving this argument according to your results, make it more clear since you cannot say this is happening across Sweden.

Limitations:

I would include another limitation taking into account that only 30% of the observations were done in the evening shift. I guess none observations were done in the night shifts.

Conclusions:

Avoid to provide references in this section

References:

Please include DOIs numbers
Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

Not relevant to this manuscript

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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