Title: The effects of workplace respect and violence on nurses' job satisfaction in Ghana: a cross-sectional survey

Authors:
Isaac Mensah Boafo (imboafo@gmail.com)

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Author’s response to reviews:

Reviewer #1: TITLE

Nurses' job satisfaction in Ghana: the neglected roles of respect and workplace violence

I don't think the use of 'neglected roles' is the best descriptor. One reason is that roles here may be confused with 'jobs' as opposed to their intended meaning: 'effects'. Additionally, there is no evidence that these effects are 'neglected'. They simply haven't been researched before. Isn't 'respect' here also related to workplace respect? Your study doesn't explore the issue of respect in the personal lives of the nurses so in this case it's 'workplace respect and violence'. The HRH journal submission guidelines also recommend author to include the study design in the title as well.

So I propose the author consider a review of the title. One title suggestion could be,

The effects of workplace respect and violence on nurses' job satisfaction in Ghana: a cross-sectional survey

Response: Title modified as suggested

ABSTRACT

Background: I suggest that in the Background section of the abstract, the author briefly describe the rationale for the study (one sentence). At first glance, the first question that came to mind when reading the Background was, 'so why do this study?' The first sentence also clearly states that there is indeed evidence linking workplace violence and respect to negative outcomes, making it even more important to justify the study. Also, it is not clear what this existing evidence is about? Is it on health professionals? Is it more about the general workforce? It would be useful to add a couple of word saying 'negative outcomes on [professional group], research on
the job satisfaction levels etc.’ It is important for the Abstract to be informative enough to be a standalone piece that provides sufficient insight into the larger study/context.

Response: Abstract modified to highlight the rationale for the study

Methods: the description of the methods is too succinct in the abstract. I believe adding another sentence or two on period of data collection and method of data analysis is warranted.

Response: Period of data collection has been stated in the abstract.

Results: 'multiple regression analysis' should read 'multiple regression analyses'

Response: Corrected

Conclusion: 'ensuring a high level of respect' sounds like a great idea, but I'm not sure how practical it is as a concluding recommendation from your findings. Do your results measure the effects of 'high level of respect' -or medium levels for that matter- on job satisfaction? I believe your study is concerned with reporting the effects of perceived low levels of respect. So wouldn't 'developing policies to address low tolerance for workplace disrespect' be a more appropriate conclusion/recommendation?

Response: Conclusion has been modified as per the reviewer’s comment. Conclusion now reads, It is concluded that non-financial strategies such as safe work environments, devoid of workplace violence may enhance their job satisfaction levels. A policy of “zero tolerance” for violence and low tolerance for disrespect could be put in place to protect nurses and healthcare professionals in general.

Key words: I believe the word ‘violence’ should be added to the list of key words, in my opinion.

Response: ‘violence’ has been included in key words

INTRODUCTION

Paragraph 1 line 4: 'worse'-> 'worst'

Response: Corrected
what is meant by turnover? Migration out of the country? Exiting the workforce?

Response: Sentence has been clarified. It now reads, ‘… as it is often linked to nurses exiting the profession’.

significant proportion': the author ought to be more specific using number etc.

Response: Specified

what is meant by 'leadership' in this context?

Response: Leadership as per the literature cited refers to nursing managers

Response: Corrected

again not sure what 'turnover rates' describes

Response: Clarified. Sentence now reads, ‘… and the rate at which nurses change jobs or leave the profession’.

substitute reference number [45] with author name

Response: Corrected

isn't another (4th) study question on the issue of violence?

Response: This is adequately captured in RQ 3

I suggest the author slightly expand the context and rationale of the study by referring to the (1) Objectives of WHO’s Global Strategy on Human Resources for Health and (2) the Recommendations of the UN Commission on Health Employment and Economic. Both refer to strategies to understand and improve the work conditions of health workers. This studies' objectives are aligned with these strategy and the author ought to make clear reference to this alignment.

Response: This has been done. See last paragraph of introduction. “Indeed this study is in line with the principles of the WHO’s Global Strategy on Human Resource for Health: Workforce 2030 (WHO, 2016). One of the principles of this strategy is to ensure the personal, employment and professional rights of all health workers, including safe and decent working environments and freedom from all kinds of discrimination, coercion and violence”.
METHODS

Paragraph 3 line 1: 'Nine out of ten regions hospitals. The regional hospitals…' why was it important to select regional hospitals? What implication does this inclusion have, if any?

Response: This has been stated. See last 4 lines of paragraph 3 of Methods. The selection of district, regional and teaching hospitals was to ensure that all the three levels (primary, secondary and tertiary) of healthcare delivery in Ghana were captured. The location, size and the type of cases handled by these hospitals may have implications for workplace violence, disrespect and nurses’ job satisfaction.

Paragraph 5 line 7: The author refer here to the case study questionnaire used to derive the violence items. But the questionnaire is only introduced in paragraph 7. I suggest the author move paragraph 7 beginning with 'The study utilized the Heath Sector…' up so it immediately follows paragraph 5.

Response: Change has been effected as per reviewer’s suggestion.

RESULTS

Paragraph 2 line 4: the paper here refers to nurses and midwives simultaneously. It is unclear what this means? Are midwives also considered nurses in Ghana? Are they an interchangeable name for the same role? I suggest the author provide a short description of nursing roles in Ghana in the INTRODUCTION. This will provide some much needed context that would explain the 'midwife/nurse' query.

Response: Nurses are midwives are not the same in Ghana. They were put together because they have the same system of ranking. This confusion has, however, been eliminated. See paragraph 2 of Results.

Paragraph 6 line 9: 'Usually, these findings mean that male nurses were given greater level of respect than their female counterparts at the hospital'. I invite caution when making such statements, because it is important to emphasize that all results are 'self-reported' and as such all conclusions must highlight 'perceived respect' rather than 'given respect'. I suggest the author rephrase this sentence and ensure the 'perceived' notion is emphasized throughout the paper.

Paragraph 7 lines 6-8: see comment about

Response: These have been changed throughout the paper to reflect the reviewer’s suggestion. See paragraphs 6 and 7.
DISCUSSION

Paragraph 1 line 8: international studies on nursing? Where?
Response: This has been clarified. Sentence now reads, “However, this finding of neutrality regarding satisfaction is, however, consistent with other international studies on nurses from countries such as Israel and Jordan”.

Paragraph 2 line 7: would be good to list those countries where nurses are also dissatisfied with pay
Response: This has been done. Sentence now reads, “The majority were dissatisfied with their salaries. This is consistent with studies from other developing economies such as Nigeria, Ethiopia and India”.

Paragraph 3 line 4: would be great to briefly expand on the other studies regularly referred to throughout the paper, like the author have done with
Response: Done. Sentence now reads “This finding is consistent with the findings of other studies which have reported a negative association between workplace violence and nurses’ job satisfaction”. See paragraph 3.

What are the strengths and weaknesses of this study?
Response: A subsection on Limitations have been created

What are the implications of this study for the nursing workforce in Ghana? How does this study contribute to the global evidence on health workforces (linking in with the WHO Global Strategy and UN Recommendations which are priority strategy for the global workforce)? And what future studies might need to be carried out to further understand and impact this area? These are all questions that should be addressed in the Discussion section but currently aren’t. I encourage the author to expand the discussion to address those questions.

Response: See Limitations and Conclusion
Reviewer #2: I enjoyed reading this article and think it can be an important contribution to the field. There was a lot of interesting findings in the article that I think could be explored in greater detail to strengthen this article and the contribution it can make.

General writing quality and effectiveness of the article:

* This is an interesting article that has data that speaks to really interesting findings; however, some of the interesting findings were not highlighted or explored as much as they could be.

Response: Efforts have been made to identify and highlight them in the results and also discuss them in the discussion section

* While overall it was a well written article, the writing needs to be revised to fix some awkward sentences, typos, and other inconsistencies (e.g., referencing style, quotations, etc.)

Response: The entire paper has been proofread to correct all such errors

Content value of the article:

* Interesting content - but it was a little light when really exploring the factors it was meant to be exploring, e.g., respect and violence. The background emphasizes that most research into nurses' job satisfaction in developing economies is largely focused on resource-related factors, and then half the paper focused on resource-related factors. Based on the data presented it seems like a more in-depth analysis could have been done on the respect and violence variables. At the bare minimum, these concepts could be addressed more in the discussion.

Response: This has been addressed. See paragraph 4 of Job satisfaction under Results. Also see paragraphs 3-6 of Discussion.

Abstract:

* The conclusion in the abstract falls flat.

Response: Abstract has been revised
Introduction and Literature Review:

* Intro would benefit from more information about this particular context. Why is it important to have a new study on this topic in Ghana, specifically? What factors might change the drivers of job satisfaction here vs. other countries mentioned?

Response: Introduction has been revised as per the reviewer’s comment. See paragraph 4 of Introduction

* Clarify what is meant by "significant proportion" (p. 3, line 14).

Response: This has been clarified. See paragraph 2 lines 1-2 of Introduction

* Some statements are left hanging, e.g., p. 3, line 35 - did the finding that nurses had dissatisfaction with the level of compensation affect their level of satisfaction?

Response: This has been clarified. See last line of paragraph 3 of Introduction

* Some information on rates of violence would be helpful in the intro

Response: The reviewer’s comment has been taken on board and the Introduction modified accordingly. See paragraph 7 of Introduction

* The research questions could be introduced better to highlight the overarching goal of the paper. Based on the research questions it sounds the relationship between violence and job satisfaction is less central to the paper's hypothesis.

Response: Research questions have been revised and re-ordered

Methods:

* It is likely against ethics guidelines to name the hospitals involved in the study

Response: I understand where the reviewer is coming from but I think mentioning the names of the hospitals does not make it possible to trace the data to any participants. More so the issues
reported here are not so sensitive to have any negative consequences on the hospitals involved. Furthermore, several papers have already been published with the names of the hospitals without any issues (See Boafo & Hancock, 2017; Boafo, Hancock & Gringart, 2016; Boafo, 2016)

* How were the participants recruited?
Response: This details were initially omitted because it was stated that the methods used in the study have also been published elsewhere. It has however, been included now. See paragraph 1 under Sampling- participants

* I would like to see some justification for using single-item measures of violence
Response: Justification has been provided. See paragraph 2 lines 3-5 under Instrument.

* Consistency in reporting on the measures
Response: Rectified

* The Work organization sub-scale description is confusing - it's using different terminology than the description of the questionnaire components in the questionnaire's intro.
Response: This has been rectified. The subscales have been removed as per the reviewer’s earlier comment that no subsequent analysis were made with these subscales.

Results:
* A correlation table would be helpful
Response: correlation table has been created. See Table 4

* Why is marital status reported in table 1? It is not mentioned anywhere in the analysis.
Response: Marital status has been analysed and discussed. See Perceived Respect paragraph 1, under Results

* Split table 2. Put the more demographic questions in table 1 and the questions related to violence in the workplace in their own table. It's confusing how they are presented now.
Response: This has been done as suggested by reviewer
* Consider using hierarchical regression to determine influence of violence over and above perceived respect, with demographic information on the first step.

Response: I think standard regression is also appropriate for the data. The unique contribution of each predictor can be estimated from the beta values. More so, hierarchical regression also has its own weaknesses (See Pallant, 2007, p. 146 – 165)

* Why mention the four factors that make up the job satisfaction scale and then only use the global score in the regression? One might expect that the predictors would be more related to some factors than others.

Response: This has been deleted both from the results and the methods to take account of the reviewer’s comment

* Table 3 - "other staff" has not been defined

Response: Operational definition has been provided. See footnote under table 3

* Incorrect table reference in text (p. 11, line 4)

Response: This has been rectified

Discussion:

* The discussion needs a substantial amount of revision to emphasize the importance of the results. It is no surprise that job satisfaction is influenced by respect and violence - what else might the authors conclude? What can be done about this issue? Is anything different about these results than other studies?

Response: Discussion has been revised as per the reviewer’s comment

* Please report on project limitations.

Response: A sub section has been created for Limitations

* This statement seems contradictory (Page 13, line 6). One line says nurses are satisfied in another says nurses are neutral.

Response: This has been addressed. See lines 2-4 of Discussion.

* Page 13, line 17 - reference 16 doesn't talk about pay.

Response: This has been rectified
There were some interesting trends in the respect data that I would have liked to see explored a little more in the discussion vs reporting again on disappointing pay. E.g., table 3 - male nurses overall received high levels of respect than female nurses - except with doctors. Did they look at the differences in satisfaction levels between male and female nurses? These other factors?

Response: This has been addressed. See paragraph two of Discussion. Gender, Junior vs. Senior Nurses, marital status, have all been discussed in relation to perceived respect.