



# JOB SATISFACTION IN CRISIS: THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON HEALTH PERSONNEL

SATISFACCIÓN LABORAL EN CRISIS: EL IMPACTO DE LA COVID-19 EN PERSONAL DE SALUD

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## Mr. Editor:

I am writing to you concerning the original article titled: "Climate and pre-pandemic job satisfaction of nursing staff in an emergency service," published in volume 23, number 2, of the year 2023. In the work mentioned above by Chávez M et al., the existence of a significant correlation between the work environment and job satisfaction in the nursing team at the Vitarte Hospital is highlighted<sup>(1)</sup>. However, considering the health emergency caused by the COVID-19 virus, starting in 2020, we believe that it is necessary to provide a global perspective on the variation in job satisfaction during this pandemic.

One of the first studies addressing this problem was conducted in China, where the pandemic outbreak originated. This research identified that high workloads, high risks of infection, sleep duration and salary levels became determining factors that reduced the job satisfaction of health personnel<sup>(2)</sup>. In countries such as Ghana and Kenya, located in Africa, previous levels of job dissatisfaction had already been reported, which experienced an increase during the pandemic that was attributed to a perception of poor preparation, high levels of stress and burnout that reached levels of up to 70% among evaluated workers<sup>(3)</sup>.

In relation to the predictive factors linked to job satisfaction, in Iran, the following were identified: mental health status (includes anxiety, depression and distress), physical condition (such as COVID-19 infection), age, gender, access to personal protective equipment (PPE) and type of institution (whether public or private<sup>(4)</sup>). However, in Europe, an increase in workload was observed that resulted in higher levels of stress, especially among middle-aged and elderly workers, due to the difficulty in adapting to new epidemiological conditions, family responsibilities and environmental factors<sup>(5)</sup>. Additionally, a study conducted in Egypt found a correlation between fear of COVID-19 infection, lower levels of job satisfaction, and increased employee turnover<sup>(6)</sup>.

In Latin America, the COVID-19 crisis revealed the vulnerabilities in the health systems of countries like Brazil, in which work overload and lack of institutional support led staff to express intentions to abandon their professions<sup>(7)</sup>. In the case of Bolivia, it was observed that a greater number of weekly office days was negatively associated with the job satisfaction of younger workers, while it was positively linked to the propensity for job rotation. Furthermore, it was observed that those employees who experienced task redistribution presented lower satisfaction levels<sup>(8)</sup>.

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In Peru, among the factors that influence the satisfaction of health workers are work overload, stress to adapt to the use of biosafety equipment for prolonged periods, the progressive deterioration of patients infected with COVID-19, the motivation, interpersonal relationships in the work environment and the quality of the equipment in their workplace<sup>(9,10)</sup>.

In conclusion, the COVID-19 pandemic greatly impacted the job satisfaction of healthcare workers, which generated a significant decrease due to

increased demand, safety risks, and lack of resources. Therefore, it is important to recognize the psychosocial consequences of this pandemic on health personnel.

This will allow the implementation of strategies for psychological support, recognition and improvement of working conditions that promote the emotional and physical well-being of health workers in order to ensure the continued quality of medical care in crisis situations in the future.

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