

# Human resources and performance of health personnel in Latin America. Systematic Review

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## Abstract

The objective of this study has been to determine the impact of human resource management on the performance of healthcare personnel based on a research question: What is the impact of human resource management on the performance of healthcare personnel? The analysis started from the search and review of 19 sources published in Spanish in journals indicated in the last 10 years in repositories such as Scopus, Dialnet and SciELO. These constructs have been shown to be key to contributing to quality care and greater user-patient satisfaction. Therefore, the strategic management of human resources has a favorable impact on the performance of the personnel working in hospitals. In this sense, the managers who make decisions in this regard have in these constructs a tool for innovation and the strengthening of professional qualities.

**Keywords:** Personnel Management; Professional Staff; Human Resources.

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the variable working conditions in human resource management in health, Ferreira & Porto (2018) argue that this is mainly conditioned by the interaction of workers with relatively aggressive agents. For this reason, these professionals have a greater vulnerability to contagion and are exposed to unhealthy environmental factors, this implies that the worker requires extra motivation and also working conditions and benefits in favor of an optimal work quality. Likewise, the authors refer that since a hospital is a space for medical care for the community, personnel management is not only oriented to the economic sphere but also to training. The highest rate of absenteeism in a hospital is evidenced when the number of overtimes is high, the salary is not in line with the market, the risks are high and dissatisfaction on the part of the employees increases.

Regarding the staff training variable, Apolo-Pérez et al. (2021) affirm that within a strategic management in hospitals, the placement of human talent in strategic positions that allow the dissemination of knowledge for the training of workers who enter to work in the center should be considered. When this placement of positions is carried out, the effectiveness in the work is evidenced and the performance of the workers can be oriented to the reinforcement of skills for the achievement of objectives in the institution. These authors state that human resource management must provide workers with tools and workshops that promote continuous training and professionalism in the various corresponding areas. These periodic trainings must be linked to a performance evaluation that is constituted by feedback from the directors of the medical institution and / or direct heads of each department.

The management of training is a process that is structured by the coordination of the direction of the medical institution and the area of human resources that consists of four main stages such as: the diagnosis of needs, planning, implementation or execution and evaluation of the results corresponding to the training (Mendieta-Ortega et al., 2020).

Regarding the management variable, Stefanini et al. (2019) report that the more employees satisfied with the company in meeting the labor and social needs of employees, they respond with greater productivity with hospital patients. By generating a climate of work well-being in hospitals, workers associate the hospital center with a dynamic essence and their perception of patient care changes in a positive way.

When a healthy work environment is created, that generates empathy and that focuses not only on the achievement of results, but also on the social problems of an entire community, a warm environment is generated in the institution that encourages the patient a tranquility to cope with your affliction. That is why, from the administrative part, cases of job dissatisfaction on the part of workers must be detected to prevent displeasure with users. The directive or management must generate quality care policies aimed at the benefit of the user of the health system (Segovia-Díaz, 2012).

Regarding the material and technological conditions to improve performance in hospitals, Suarez et al. (2013) argue that hospital costs are divided into operating costs and structure costs, for each of these costs it is necessary to detect the operating factors and the structural factors of the institution. The operational factors include the needs that generate an action, that is, this factor is made up of human talent, such as medical personnel, technical personnel, security, orderlies, cleaning personnel, among others. Structural factors are those that are made up of an economic investment made in a fixed way, such as the purchase of equipment, real estate and the technology used for the constitution of medical equipment.

Serrano & Ortíz (2012) assert that the inadequate maintenance of the technological equipment used by health professionals generates in them a decrease in job satisfaction and self-esteem as professionals. In the same way, this factor is linked to the inefficiency in the quality of the services, since the user equates the lack of equipment with an inadequate service on the part of the medical personnel, which generates discomfort on both sides.

This systematic review proposes to identify the study variables when addressing the performance of health personnel in hospitals in Latin America between 2012 and 2021. In addition, specific reviews on Human Resources management could inform an improvement in public decisions to surveillance and risk prevention in the region.

## **II. METHODOLOGY**

This is a systematic review study of articles published on human resources and the performance of health personnel in hospitals in Latin American countries in the last 10 years. The review considered the following stages: (1) a database search for articles published between 2011 and 2021. The following data were extracted: title, author, journal, DOI, year, abstract, and country or institution. Duplicates were then removed from each search battery and imported into Mendeley's bibliographic manager.

### **Information resources**

Open access and subscription databases were considered to search for scientific articles relevant to research, such as Dialnet, Scielo, Redalyc and Scopus.

### **Selection or search process**

Keywords were used in the search "capacitación" AND "desempeño" AND "hospital"; "Salario" AND "desempeño" "salud"; "gestión hospitalaria" AND "desempeño"; "gestión de empleados" AND "personal de salud"; "Hospitales" AND "desempeño"; "Recursos humanos" AND "eficacia " AND "salud"; "Motivación" AND "desempeño "; "Satisfacción laboral" AND "desempeño " AND "hospital"; "Motivación " AND "empleados" AND "hospital"; " recursos humanos " AND " desempeño" AND "hospitales"; "Desempeño "AND "gestión salud"; "Evaluación de desempeño "AND "hospitales" For this, the connectors "AND" and "OR" were used, taking into account the years of publication and the Latin American countries.

### **Selection of studies with the eligibility criteria**

The inclusion criteria considered were the following: hospital health personnel; variables and / or indicators that express performance in hospitals; publication range 2011 to 2021; publications that have as a sample hospital in Latin America; language in Spanish, Portuguese and English.

The exclusion criteria considered were publications older than 2011; publications made outside the selected countries. Based on the aforementioned, the systematic review was carried out, applying a comparative study between the selected articles. To achieve a correct process, a flow was applied in the selection process (figure 1).

Figure 1. PRISMA flow diagram of the study selection process (Urrutia & Bonfill, 2010)

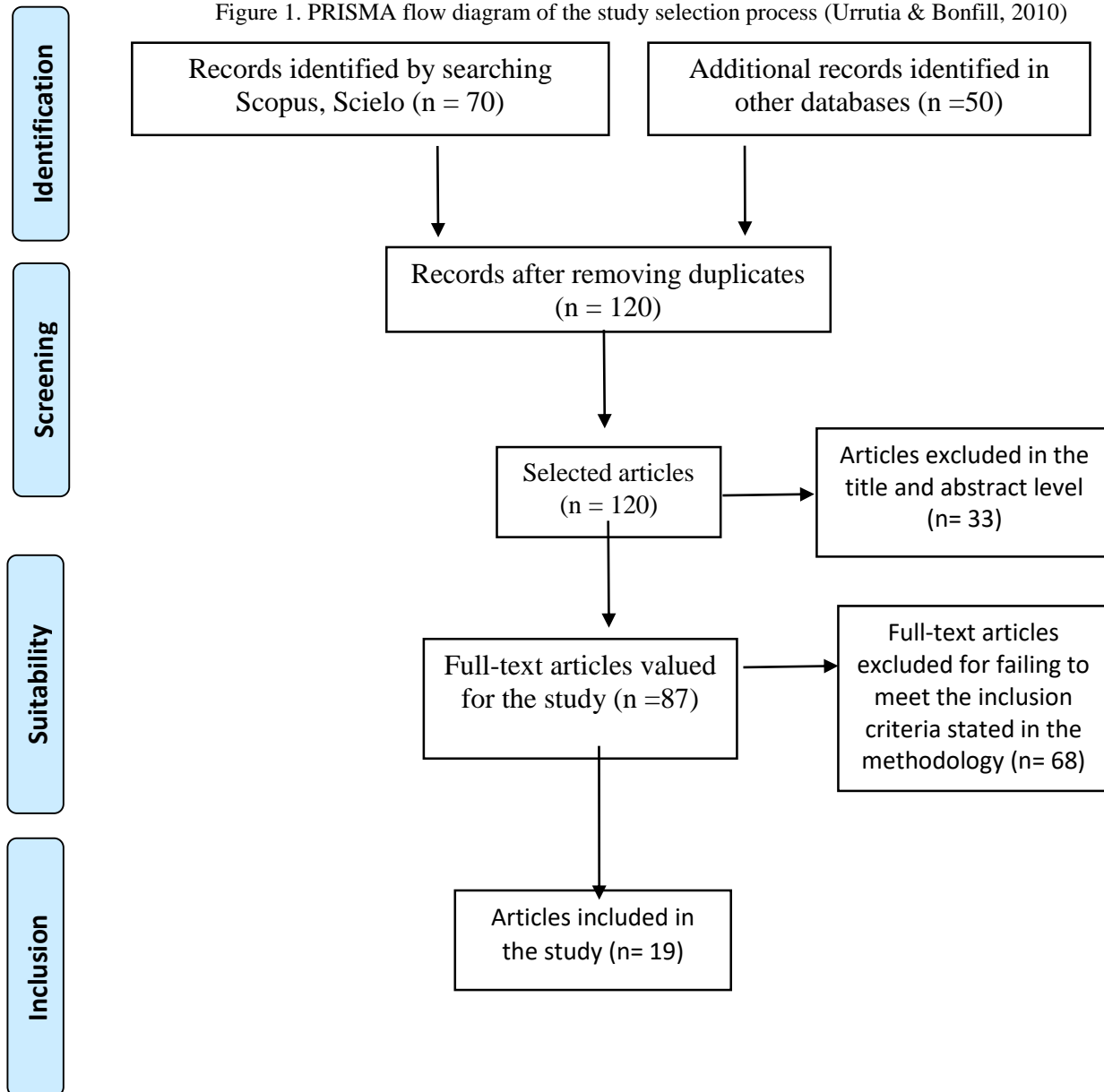


Table 1. Studies considered in the analysis

Author / Year of Publication	Journal / Institution	Country	Database	Methodology	lenguaje
(Fernández et al., 2019)	Nure Investigación	Argentina	Dialnet	Quantitative observational cross-section	Spanish
(Lumbreras-Guzmán et al., 2020)	Salud Publica de Mexico	México	Dialnet	Analytical cross-section	Spanish
(Apolo-Pérez et al., 2021)	Cienciamatria	Venezuela	Dialnet	descriptive - transversal	Spanish
(Serrano & Ortíz, 2012)	Dyna	Colombia	Scopus	Qualitative	Spanish
(Portulhak et al., 2017)	Revista de Salud Pública	Brasil	Scopus	Case study	English
(Chacón, 2017)	3C Empresa	Ecuador	Dialnet	Quantitative	Spanish
(Morales-Casetti et al., 2019)	Revista de Salud pública	Chile	Scopus	Not experimental	Spanish

(Bron & Mar, 2020)	Revista Cubana de Informática Médica	Cuba	Scielo	cross-sectional, descriptive	Spanish
(Morici & Barbosa, 2012)	Revista de Administração Pública	Brasil	Scielo	Qualitative	Portuguese
(Acosta-Prado et al., 2020)	Frontiers in Psychology estrategia asociativa	Colombia	Scopus	Empirical, explanatory study	English
(Ramos et al., 2015)	Revista de Saude Publica	Brasil	Scielo	Cross	English
(Silva et al., 2016)	Revista de Administração da Universidade Federal de Santa Maria	Brasil	Redalyc	Qualitative	Portuguese
(Cunha et al., 2021)	Congresso Internacional em Saúde	Brasil	Google Scholar	Qualitative	Portuguese
(Segovia-Díaz, 2012)	Boletín Científico Sapiens Research	Chile	Dialnet	Qualitative	Spanish
(Barja-Ore et al., 2021)	Revista Cubana de Medicina Militar	Perú	Scopus	Non-experimental and retrospective	Spanish
(Heredia-Quito & Narváez-Zurita, 2021)	Revista Arbitrada Interdisciplinaria Koinonía	Ecuador	Dialnet	descriptive non-experimental	Spanish
(Mendieta-Ortega et al., 2020)	Revista Arbitrada Interdisciplinaria Koinonía	Ecuador	Dialnet	descriptive cross-sectional non-experimental	Spanish
(Brito et al., 2017)	Cadernos de Saúde Pública	Brasil	Scielo	Qualitative	Portuguese
(Rodrigues & Barbosa, 2021)	Nova Economía	Brasil	Scielo	Quantitative	Portuguese

### III. RESULTS

Table 3 summarizes the countries where the articles were obtained, most of the research carried out in the following countries: Brazil, Ecuador, Colombia, Chile and others, the highest percentage being Brazil (36.8%).

Table 3. Country of HR studies in Latin America (n = 19)

Países	n	%
Brasil	7	36.8 %
Ecuador	3	15.7 %
Colombia	2	10.5 %
Chile	2	10.5 %
Others	5	26.5 %

Source: self-made.

Likewise, the predominant designs of the articles, where quantitative cross-sectional observational and secondly qualitative studies stand out. On the other hand, the study by Acosta-Prado et al. (2020) tested a mediation model, using a latent variables design (LVD) or structural equation modeling (SEM), which consists of two parts that make up the model: a structure or internal model (the relationship between the constructs) and the other measure or external model.

Table 4. Predominant designs in Latin America (n = 19)

	n	%
1 Quantitative observational cross-section	8	42.2%
2 Qualitative approach	4	21.0%

3	Explanatory	1	5.2%
4	Case study	1	5.2%
5	Others	5	26.4%

Source: self-made.

In addition to the countries and research designs, the results will be presented considering the following variables: working conditions, training, management and leadership of executives present in research related to the subject; Regarding the variable working conditions and its impact on performance, the following indicators are considered: job satisfaction, work environment, salary, incentives. In the study Fernández et al. (2019) the findings show a degree of association between motivation and job satisfaction, with the lowest valuation in benefits and / or remuneration and the highest satisfaction is personal development and performance of tasks. Another part, the study by Lumbreras-Guzmán et al. (2020) shows the optimal relationship between the quality of work life and the performance of workers, which must be mediated by directive management in the "organization at work." On the other hand, the same study indicates that dissatisfaction in working conditions has a negative impact on teamwork and low motivation to join the inductions provided by management. The management of people in hospitals is a critical point and they need special attention, according to the indicators, better management is required, so that the institutions can improve their practices (Silva et al., 2016).

The staff training variable; consider the following indicators: training, continuous training, specializations, technical skills, admission processes. In this regard, Lumbreras-Guzmán et al. (2020); Apolo-Pérez et al. (2021) and Ramos et al. (2015) found a positive association between training and performance of health personnel. Likewise, several studies show that as the staff is not trained there is a risk that the objectives are not achieved, therefore it is necessary to train the staff, evaluate and measure the performance of their activities, achieving a highly qualified staff (Apolo-Pérez et al., 2021). In addition, the dissatisfaction factors of the health personnel refer to the lack of training for performance, feedback from the supervision, and the absence of talent retention programs (Lumbreras-Guzmán et al., 2020). Hospitals that include education in their activities had a higher operational performance, although with the associated importance of the use of human resources and highly complex structures (Ramos et al., 2015). On the other hand, in the selection processes, the competitions are not carried out on a regular basis and are prolonged. In addition, the selection criteria used are questioned, since they are based on degrees and theoretical knowledge, without guarantees that this knowledge will be reflected in the practice of patient care (Morici & Barbosa, 2012).

At the level of hospital institutions, little knowledge is evidenced about the hospital management course, however, they perceive that it is a relevant course for the health sector (Cunha et al., 2021). The study by Segovia-Díaz (2012) shows that the shortcomings of certain training policies affect the management of human groups and the criteria how performance is evaluated.

For their part, Heredia-Quito & Narváez-Zurita (2021) affirm that it is necessary to train public employees in management positions. Finally, Mendieta-Ortega et al. (2020) affirms that it is necessary to carry out knowledge update workshops that, in turn, are useful to reinforce loyalty with the institution, reducing the drain of human talent.

The Management variable includes the following indicators: management models, leadership, use of equipment and technological tools, performance evaluation. In this regard, Chacón (2017) has shown that if the institutional resource optimizes its internal processes, then it gradually improves the quality of the service offered by public health, which represents a more satisfied user-patient. Management by processes allows to have tools that help to focus the keys to effective results (Serrano & Ortíz, 2012). Specialized hospitals had a significantly lower mortality rate than general hospitals, indicating the positive effect of the volume of procedures and technology used on clinical outcomes (Ramos et al., 2015).

At the level of public health organizations, improving performance also involves periodically evaluating the management style adopted by management (Lumbreras-Guzmán et al., 2020). The study by Rodrigues & Barbosa (2021) shows that Human Resources Management contributes to the efficiency and performance of hospitals, considering that this was the variable most needed to increase efficiency in Small Port hospitals.

Regarding performance evaluation, it stimulates the productivity of human resources (Bron & Mar, 2020). The study by Portulhak et al. (2017) aims to draw the attention of managers regarding how to implement improvements in a complex and heterogeneous organizational context. In their study (Heredia-Quito & Narváez-Zurita, 2021) they propose to apply 360 ° performance evaluation to improve administrative management.

Finally, the management and leadership teams in the improvement of job performance show that to the extent that the immediate boss favors the recognition, support and stimulates the creativity of his subordinates, job performance is improved, therefore the appropriate and transparent selection of the employee is necessary. team (Lumbreras-Guzmán et al., 2020). Along these lines, a study allows us to affirm that the appointment of selected professionals to the management of public hospitals has increased the number of discharges (Morales-Casetti et al., 2019).

#### IV. DISCUSSION

Regarding working conditions, these are defined as the set of factors that condition the situation in which the employee carries out his tasks; These include hours of work, organization and content of work, social welfare services. In this regard, an association was found between these, motivation and job satisfaction (Fernández et al., 2019)), in addition to a significant relationship between working conditions and professional performance (Lumbreras-Guzmán et al., 2020). In addition to the above, the incidence of strategic management for the gradual improvement of said conditions (Silva et al., 2016). The aforementioned results support the theoretical bases set forth in the sense that working conditions in health care are peculiar, since they tend to be

particularly adverse; for example: reasonable exposure to the risk of contagion (Ferreira & Porto, 2018). This risk factor is not found in most professional careers, so decision makers must bear in mind that these conditions do not only imply material aspects, but also occupational safety and trust. In this last aspect, what health workers would like is the confidence that they will receive timely assistance or that, if a fatal outcome has occurred, their family members will not be left helpless; They will receive the benefits to which they are entitled according to the current legal system.

In relation to the training of personnel, following Cortina (1998), it must be approached conceptually and evaluatively as a medium and long-term project with social projection so that professionals, technicians and assistants not only have the necessary cognitive and technical skills (Giménez & Valeria, 2004). As much or perhaps more important is that they are also citizens with a substantial contribution to democratic management and governance in health. In other words, that health personnel graduate from university classrooms with the ability to direct public health and manage the proper use of available resources, in addition to the essential exercise of their citizen rights and the defense of social and labor security, salary dignity and real and collective participation in decision-making. In this systematic review, investigations have been analyzed where staff training and professional performance are associated, such as those of Ramos et al. (2015); Apolo-Pérez et al. (2021) and Lumbreras-Guzmán et al. (2020). From the above, it can be deduced that a deficient level of training would correspond to a performance of a regular or low level. Unfortunately, this is evidenced in the public merit contest where the admission of personnel has as one of its main criteria the application of the knowledge acquired during continuous professional training (Cunha et al. (2021); Morici & Barbosa (2012); Segovia -Díaz (2012); Heredia-Quito & Narváez-Zurita (2021); Mendieta-Ortega et al. (2020).

With regard to management, according to (Robbins & Judge, 2009), the effective coordination of various activities and assets so that the planned goals are achieved, the choice of certain actions depending on what you want to achieve is involved. with the available means ensuring optimal use of resources. This statement coincides with Chacón (2017) who found that the managers of a hospital, in the management evaluation, start from certain indicators such as theoretical-practical models, leadership, use of equipment and logistics and technological tools, performance of collaborators, among others. There is no doubt that after the management is implemented a perception of satisfaction or dissatisfaction is generated in the user of the service. In the systematic review carried out, the interest and the implementation of management by processes has stood out. Following Ostroff (2000), it is an approach to approach work where what is sought is the continuous improvement of tasks and activities of a corporation from identifying, selecting, describing, documenting and innovating the processes. Precisely, Serrano & Ortíz (2012) found that this management model provides an optimal approach to approach user satisfaction, although some hospitals are still only at an initial level of achievement. Its effectiveness is not limited to patient care but also has a positive impact on user mortality (Ramos et al., 2015); In that sense, effective staff performance is a key factor in desired success.

Regarding leadership, (Bergeron, 1983) defined it as a set of skills and impersonal communication that allow an individual to be sufficiently influential in their environment in order to effectively achieve the objectives of the organization. The articles consulted coincide in pointing out that democratic leadership improves work performance because it encourages creativity, permanent innovation and constant monitoring of the planning of hospital processes (Lumbreras-Guzmán et al. (2020); Morales-Casetti et al. (2019). To this is added that it stimulates the increase of the yields both in the material and in the human (Bron & Mar (2020); Portulhak et al. (2017).

## V. CONCLUSION

This study has shown that the scientific literature in relation to human resource management and staff performance is mostly associated with quality of work life, professional development, continuous training, process management and comprehensive assessment of the capabilities of the health professional. From this perspective, human resource management implies leadership for constant commitment and innovation within the organization, in this case, hospitals. It was found that effective management of professional staff skills contributes to their performance reaching job performance standards, promoting that their theoretical knowledge is systematically incorporated into the attention of users. Thus, the quality of the service is improved, and greater user-patient satisfaction is ensured.

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