

Intrinsic Motivation and Nursing Performance: A Quantitative Study of the Mediating Effect of Organizational Citizenship Behavior

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ARTICLE INFORMATION

Publication information

Research article

HOW TO CITE

Mursaha, I., Alhadar, F. M., & Soleman, M. General Hospital, Central Halmahera M. (2026). Intrinsic motivation and nursing Regency. The study employs a quantitative performance: A quantitative study of the approach, with a population of 324 mediating effect of organizational employees and a sample consisting of 106 citizenship behavior. *Journal of nursing staff. The sample was selected International Conference Proceedings*, using purposive sampling, and the data were analyzed using path analysis (path modeling) with the aid of SmartPLS version 4. The findings indicate that: (1) intrinsic motivation has a positive and significant effect on nursing staff performance; (2) intrinsic motivation positively and significantly affects OCB; (3) OCB has a positive and significant effect on nursing staff performance; and (4) OCB functions as a partial mediator in the relationship between intrinsic motivation and nursing staff performance.

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.32535/jicp.v8i4.4369>

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the influence of intrinsic motivation on the performance of nursing staff, with Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) serving as a mediating variable at Weda Regional General Hospital, Central Halmahera M. (2026). Intrinsic motivation and nursing Regency. The study employs a quantitative performance: A quantitative study of the approach, with a population of 324 mediating effect of organizational employees and a sample consisting of 106 citizenship behavior. *Journal of nursing staff. The sample was selected International Conference Proceedings*, using purposive sampling, and the data were analyzed using path analysis (path modeling) with the aid of SmartPLS version 4. The findings indicate that: (1) intrinsic motivation has a positive and significant effect on nursing staff performance; (2) intrinsic motivation positively and significantly affects OCB; (3) OCB has a positive and significant effect on nursing staff performance; and (4) OCB functions as a partial mediator in the relationship between intrinsic motivation and nursing staff performance.

Keywords: Intrinsic Motivation; Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB); Nursing Staff Performance

Received: 18 November 2025

Accepted: 20 December 2025

Published: 31 January 2026

INTRODUCTION

Transformation within the modern healthcare system affirms the strategic position of the nursing profession as a fundamental component in ensuring service quality, patient safety, and the operational efficiency of health institutions (Oh & Chung, 2011; Peng et al., 2023; Doruker et al., 2025). The increasing complexity of work demands, pressures within professional environments, and the need for multidimensional competencies further reinforce the urgency of achieving superior and sustainable nursing performance as a key indicator of organizational success in healthcare settings (Oh & Chung, 2011; Mariyani et al., 2023; Hee et al., 2016).

Nursing performance not only reflects technical proficiency but also encompasses interpersonal skills, ethical responsibility, and contributions to overall team effectiveness (Oh & Chung, 2011; Peng et al., 2023). A deep understanding of the factors influencing nursing performance is therefore a strategic effort toward strengthening human resource management and enhancing the professionalism of nursing personnel amid the dynamic quality-driven demands of healthcare services.

One internal factor that has received widespread scholarly attention is intrinsic motivation, defined as the internal drive to work optimally without dependence on external rewards. Various studies have shown that nurses with high levels of intrinsic motivation tend to perform better, exhibit greater resilience to work pressures, and experience more stable professional satisfaction (Jaaffar & Samy, 2023). This intrinsic drive strengthens a sense of belonging to the profession, provides deeper meaning to professional roles, and increases commitment to patient care (Hee et al., 2016; Özlük & Baykal, 2020; Atalla et al., 2024). These findings indicate that managerial strategies aimed at enhancing intrinsic motivation hold significant potential to support the sustainability of nursing performance.

However, the relationship between intrinsic motivation and performance does not always operate directly. Several empirical studies highlight the presence of mediating variables that bridge the influence of motivation on organizational behavior, one of which is Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) (Özlük & Baykal, 2020; Syafitri, 2024). OCB refers to voluntary, extra-role behaviors that go beyond formal job descriptions and contribute to the overall effectiveness of the organization. In nursing practice, OCB manifests in actions such as helping colleagues, fostering harmonious interpersonal relationships, and showing initiative in addressing clinical challenges. These behavioral tendencies strengthen team cohesion, facilitate coordination, and enhance organizational adaptability to the dynamic nature of patient care.

Research in organizational psychology and human resource management consistently confirms that OCB plays a significant role in improving both individual and group performance (Abtahi & Esmaeili, 2013; Atalla et al., 2024). Positioning OCB as a mediating variable between intrinsic motivation and nursing performance is therefore supported by strong theoretical foundations and offers high practical value for designing evidence-based interventions in nursing workforce management. Understanding this mediation mechanism provides policymakers and healthcare managers with valuable insights into fostering work environments that support prosocial behavior, organizational loyalty, and sustainable productivity.

Drawing upon the conceptual framework and empirical evidence, this study aims to examine the effect of intrinsic motivation on nursing performance, with Organizational Citizenship Behavior serving as a mediating variable. A quantitative approach is employed to test the proposed theoretical model and to provide an empirical contribution

to the development of adaptive and contextually relevant human resource management practices in the nursing profession.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Performance of Nursing Personnel

Performance reflects the results of an individual's implementation of their duties in accordance with their assigned role to achieve organizational goals (Hidayat, 2021). In the nursing profession, performance refers to the nurse's ability to carry out the nursing care process professionally (Kuvaas et al., 2016). This aspect also illustrates the extent to which nursing personnel contribute to achieving unit-level and hospital-wide goals through the application of relevant behaviors, skills, competencies, and knowledge (Agistina & Gani, 2020). Nurse performance is reflected in work outcomes that demonstrate the ability to provide effective and efficient nursing services in accordance with professional standards, thereby supporting the achievement of organizational goals.

Research by Lu et al. (2019) confirms that individual motivation significantly influences nursing personnel performance, with intrinsic motivation playing an important role in fostering high work engagement and proactive behavior. Meanwhile, Blegen et al. (2001) show that improving nurse performance directly affects patient safety and the overall quality of hospital services. Thus, a comprehensive understanding of nursing performance is not only crucial for evaluating individual achievement but also serves as a strategic foundation for enhancing the broader quality of healthcare services.

Intrinsic Motivation and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

Intrinsic motivation is defined as an internal drive to engage in an activity for the inherent satisfaction it provides, rather than for external incentives such as rewards or recognition (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Within the nursing context, intrinsic motivation has been shown to play a vital role in enhancing job satisfaction, professional commitment, and the quality of patient care. Nurses driven by intrinsic factors—such as empathy, a desire to help others, or a moral calling—tend to demonstrate perseverance, initiative, and resilience when encountering work-related pressures (Gagné & Deci, 2005).

Empirical evidence supports the positive relationship between intrinsic motivation and performance. Studies by Adi and Anisah (2023) reveal that intrinsic motivation positively and significantly influences employee performance. Similar findings from Sutoro et al. (2024) confirm that intrinsic motivation positively affects overall performance. Moreover, research by Santika et al. (2023) and Adi & Anisah (2023) demonstrates that intrinsic motivation significantly enhances Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB).

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) is defined as voluntary behavior that is not included in formal job descriptions but substantially contributes to organizational effectiveness (Organ, 1988). In the nursing field, OCB may be reflected in behaviors such as assisting colleagues, voluntarily working additional hours, or giving extra attention to patients' needs. Individuals with high intrinsic motivation are more inclined to display OCB because such behaviors align with personal values and organizational goals (Kim, 2006; Podsakoff et al., 2000).

Research by Kadarningsih et al. (2020) shows that OCB has a positive and significant influence on employee performance. Similar evidence from Santika et al. (2023) and Hong and Zainal (2022) suggests that OCB contributes to increased productivity and work effectiveness.

H1: Intrinsic motivation has a positive and significant effect on nursing performance.

H2: Intrinsic motivation has a positive and significant effect on OCB.

H3: OCB has a positive and significant effect on nursing performance.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) as a Mediation Variable

OCB has been widely identified as a mediating variable linking intrinsic motivation to performance. These findings indicate that increased intrinsic motivation can indirectly improve performance by strengthening organizational civic behavior. Research by [Saleem et al. \(2020\)](#) demonstrates that OCB mediates the relationship between intrinsic motivation and employee performance, including within the healthcare sector. Similarly, [Yousaf et al. \(2020\)](#) found that nurses with higher intrinsic motivation tend to display stronger OCB, which subsequently enhances their performance.

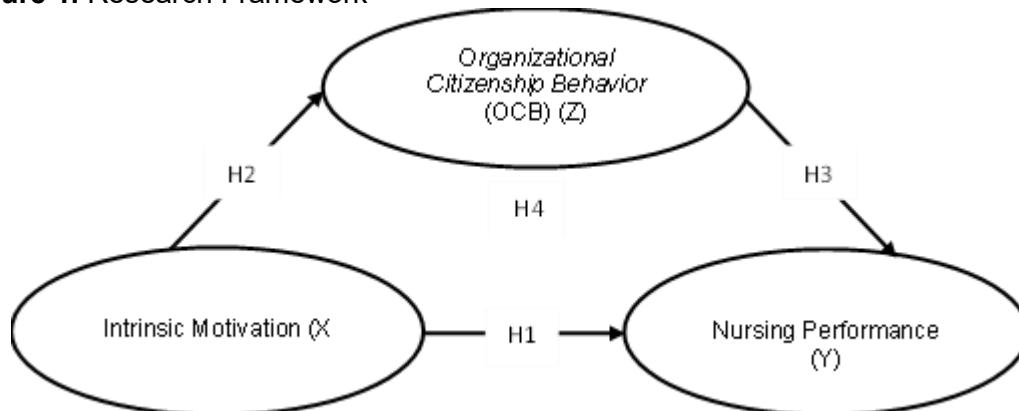
Other studies further reinforce this relationship. Intrinsic motivation positively influences the emergence of OCB, and OCB serves as a pathway that channels this effect toward improved nursing performance ([Kim, 2006](#); [Podsakoff et al., 2000](#); [Saleem et al., 2020](#)). Thus, OCB plays a crucial role in explaining the psychological and behavioral mechanisms that connect intrinsic motivation with enhanced nurse performance.

H4: Intrinsic motivation has a positive and significant effect on nursing performance through OCB.

Conceptual Framework

The study framework model is depicted in [Figure 1](#).

Figure 1. Research Framework



RESEARCH METHOD

Sampling and Data Collection

The study population comprises all nursing staff at Weda Hospital, totaling 106 respondents. The sampling technique used is saturated sampling or census, considering the relatively small population size; therefore, all nursing staff were included as research respondents. Data were collected through questionnaires that were completed independently by the nursing staff at the hospital.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using the Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach within the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) framework, which is appropriate for relatively small sample sizes and non-normally distributed data ([Ardi & Isnayanti, 2020](#)). The analysis procedure consisted of two main stages: the outer model and the inner model ([Hair et al., 2019](#)).

The outer model stage evaluates the reliability and validity of the constructs. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability, with a minimum threshold of 0.7. Convergent validity was examined through the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), which must exceed 0.5. Discriminant validity testing was also conducted to ensure that each indicator correlates strongly with its respective construct and does not overlap with other constructs.

The inner model stage focuses on testing the causal relationships among variables and evaluating hypotheses using R^2 values, path coefficients, and p-values. The mediation testing procedure follows the approach of [Baron and Kenny \(1986\)](#), consisting of two analytical steps: (1) testing the direct effect of intrinsic motivation on performance, and (2) testing the indirect effect through the mediating variable, Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB). Partial mediation is indicated when the direct effect remains significant after the mediator is included, whereas full mediation occurs when the direct effect becomes non-significant once the mediator is incorporated into the model. Hypotheses are accepted when the tested relationships show a positive direction with a p-value < 0.05 ([Hamzah et al., 2018](#)).

Measurement

Nursing performance measurement refers to the indicators proposed by [Robbins and Judge \(2013\)](#), comprising six key dimensions. The first dimension, work quality, reflects the precision, accuracy, and quality of task outcomes. The second, work quantity, assesses the volume of work completed within a specific period. The third, punctuality, reflects the ability to complete tasks according to predetermined schedules. The fourth, effectiveness, measures the extent to which tasks are performed by optimizing available resources. The fifth, independence, reflects the ability to carry out duties without excessive supervision. The sixth, work commitment, indicates the level of seriousness, dedication, and responsibility in performing assigned tasks.

Indicators of intrinsic motivation, based on [Herzberg et al. \(2011\)](#), consist of five aspects: achievement, recognition of achievement, the nature of the work itself, responsibility, and opportunities for personal growth and development at work.

The OCB measurement refers to [Organ \(1988\)](#), consisting of five components: altruism (voluntary willingness to help colleagues), conscientiousness (working beyond expected standards), sportsmanship (positive acceptance of working conditions), courtesy (maintaining good relationships among colleagues), and civic virtue (active participation in organizational activities and responsibilities).

RESULTS

Direct Testing

Structural model analysis was conducted to evaluate and verify the causal relationships among the study's primary variables: intrinsic motivation, Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), and nursing staff performance. The analysis was performed using the bootstrapping method in SmartPLS 4.0 to estimate the significance level of each relationship between variables.

Statistical significance was determined using two main indicators: the t-statistic and the p-value. A relationship is considered statistically significant when the t-statistic exceeds 1.96 and the p-value is below 0.05. This criterion ensures that the observed relationships possess a strong and reliable empirical foundation in explaining the proposed research model.

Table 1. Directing Effect

Path Coefficients	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	(P values)
Intrinsic Motivation → Nursing Performance	0.450	0.444	0.077	5.879	0.000
Intrinsic Motivation → (OCB)	0.320	0.338	0.080	4.004	0.000
(OCB) → Nursing Performance	0.310	0.334	0.099	3.133	0.001

Source: SmartPLS 4.0 output (2025).

Intrinsic motivation was found to have a positive and significant influence on nursing performance, with $t = 5.879$ and $p = 0.000$. This indicates that the stronger the internal drive possessed by nursing personnel—such as a sense of responsibility, meaningfulness in work, and intrinsic satisfaction from providing patient care—the better their performance outcomes. These findings reinforce the notion that personnel in service-oriented sectors, particularly healthcare, are strongly driven by psychological, emotional, and personal factors.

In addition, intrinsic motivation was shown to have a significant effect on OCB, with $t = 4.004$ and $p = 0.000$. This result suggests that nurses with strong internal work motivation tend to display more extra-role behaviors, such as voluntarily assisting colleagues, maintaining a positive work climate, and taking initiative in addressing challenges within their work environment. These findings confirm that intrinsic motivation is a key driver encouraging nursing staff to go beyond formal job boundaries.

The results further indicate that OCB has a positive and significant effect on nursing performance, with a t -value of 3.133 and a p -value of 0.001. This implies that nurses who consistently demonstrate citizenship behaviors tend to cultivate a work environment that enhances productivity, efficiency, and the overall quality of nursing services. Such behaviors not only strengthen individual performance but also promote teamwork, collaboration, and collective effectiveness.

Indirect Testing

Table 2. Indirect Effect (Mediation)

Path Coefficients	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Intrinsic Motivation Intrinsic → OCB → Nursing Performance	0.099	0.114	0.047	2.097	0.018

Source: SmartPLS 4.0 output (2025).

The mechanism through which intrinsic motivation influences nursing performance occurs not only directly but also through the mediating role of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB). The analysis reveals that intrinsic motivation has a positive and significant indirect effect on performance through OCB, with a path coefficient of 0.099, a t -statistic of 2.097, and a p -value of 0.018. These findings statistically confirm that OCB functions as a mediator in the relationship between intrinsic motivation and nursing performance.

The direct relationship between intrinsic motivation and performance also remained significant, with a coefficient of 0.450, $t = 5.879$, and $p = 0.000$. This indicates that intrinsic

motivation maintains a strong influence on performance even after the inclusion of OCB in the analytical model. Because both direct and indirect effects are significant, the mediation pattern is categorized as partial mediation.

These results imply that OCB strengthens the influence of intrinsic motivation on performance but does not fully replace the direct effect. This aligns with the mediation concept proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986), which states that partial mediation occurs when the mediator enhances the relationship between the independent and dependent variables without eliminating the initially existing direct effect.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study as a whole strengthen the theoretical framework and the proposed hypothesis: that intrinsic motivation plays an important role in improving the performance of nursing personnel, both directly and indirectly through its influence on Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB).

The first finding indicates that intrinsic motivation has a positive and significant effect on nurse performance, consistent with previous research by [Jaaffar and Samy \(2023\)](#), [Sutoro et al. \(2024\)](#), and [Adi and Anisah \(2023\)](#). The internal work impulse that arises from within the individual, such as a sense of responsibility, job satisfaction, and the desire to achieve professional accomplishments, serves as psychological energy that supports higher productivity, greater work accuracy, and improved service efficiency. In the hospital context, nurses with high intrinsic motivation tend to demonstrate strong dedication and emotional involvement, ultimately enhancing the quality of nursing care provided to patients.

The second finding shows that intrinsic motivation positively influences OCB, aligning with the findings of [Kim \(2006\)](#), [Podsakoff et al. \(2000\)](#), and [Santika et al. \(2023\)](#). Individuals with high intrinsic motivation are more likely to engage in extra role behaviors, such as volunteering to assist colleagues, maintaining harmony among team members, and demonstrating loyalty to the organization. In the nursing profession, OCB plays a strategic role by supporting cross functional coordination, strengthening teamwork, and helping nursing teams adapt more effectively to work pressures.

The third finding indicates that OCB has a positive and significant impact on nurse performance, as shown in the studies of [Kadarningsih et al. \(2020\)](#) and [Hong & Zainal \(2022\)](#). OCB contributes to the improvement of organizational effectiveness by strengthening collaboration among team members, optimizing work processes, and supporting the achievement of better work outcomes. Nurses who actively demonstrate organizational citizenship behaviors help maintain continuity of patient care and foster a positive work culture within the hospital environment.

Furthermore, the mediation test results show that OCB partially mediates the relationship between intrinsic motivation and nursing performance. This indicates that intrinsic motivation not only affects performance directly but also indirectly by increasing OCB. Although the mediation effect is significant, the direct effect of intrinsic motivation on performance remains dominant, confirming partial mediation. These results support the mediation model described by [Baron and Kenny \(1986\)](#) and are reinforced by the findings of [Saleem et al. \(2020\)](#) and [Yousaf et al. \(2020\)](#), which confirm that OCB strengthens the relationship between motivation and performance without eliminating the established direct effect.

Overall, this study provides a comprehensive understanding that intrinsic motivation and OCB complement each other in shaping superior work behavior among nursing personnel. These two factors serve as essential foundations for the nursing profession, which requires high levels of dedication, social empathy, and psychological resilience in delivering health services professionally, ethically, and with integrity.

Research Implications

Theoretical Implications

This research makes an important contribution to the development of theories in human resource management by expanding the understanding of the psychological and behavioral mechanisms that link intrinsic motivation to nursing performance. The identification of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) as a partial mediator adds a new dimension to existing literature, which previously emphasized the direct relationship between the two variables. These findings enrich a more comprehensive and contextual conceptual framework, especially within public service professions such as nursing, where technical competence, social empathy, and moral commitment must be developed in balance. The study therefore reinforces the theoretical proposition that intrinsic motivation functions not only as an internal psychological drive but also as a significant determinant that shapes extra-role behaviors and, consequently, enhances overall performance.

Practical Implications

From a practical perspective, the results of this study provide strategic insights for hospital management and nursing leaders. Strengthening intrinsic motivation among nursing personnel should be prioritized, not solely through external incentives but also through efforts that enhance internal psychological fulfillment. This can be achieved through reflective training, structured self-development programs, and non-material recognition for nurses who demonstrate dedication and superior performance.

In addition, cultivating a work culture that supports the development of OCB is essential. This requires the creation of a collaborative work climate, the enhancement of interpersonal skills, and exemplary leadership capable of demonstrating proactive, supportive, and ethical work behaviors. The study further suggests that performance appraisal systems in hospitals need to incorporate not only formal task completion but also recognition of extra-role contributions. Such an integrated system can strengthen reward mechanisms, performance evaluations, and career development pathways, thereby encouraging sustainable positive behaviors within nursing teams.

Suggestions for Further Research

The results of this study open several opportunities for further research. Future studies are encouraged to develop an expanded research model by incorporating additional moderator or mediator variables, such as job satisfaction, transformational leadership, or work environment conditions. Including these variables may provide a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamic interactions that influence nursing performance.

It is also recommended that future research replicate this study across hospitals or healthcare institutions in different regions to test external validity and strengthen the generalizability of the model. Differences in organizational culture, demographic characteristics, and the complexity of nursing duties across various healthcare settings should be considered to obtain a richer and more representative understanding of the factors that shape nursing performance.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that intrinsic motivation plays an essential role in improving nursing performance. Nurses who possess strong internal motivation—such as responsibility and work satisfaction—demonstrate higher performance quality and effectiveness. The findings also show that intrinsic motivation significantly enhances Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), where internally motivated nurses are more likely to exhibit extra-role behaviors that support teamwork and organizational harmony.

Furthermore, OCB is proven to positively and significantly contribute to nursing performance by strengthening collaboration, improving service efficiency, and creating a supportive work environment. The mediation analysis indicates that OCB partially mediates the relationship between intrinsic motivation and nursing performance. Intrinsic motivation affects performance both directly and indirectly through OCB, with the direct effect remaining more dominant.

Overall, the study confirms that intrinsic motivation and OCB are key behavioral components that reinforce superior nursing performance and are crucial for achieving optimal service quality in healthcare institutions.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors gratefully acknowledge the contributions of informants, colleagues, and all individuals who supported this research through their insights and engagement. Their involvement greatly enriched the quality and depth of this study.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS

The authors have declared no potential conflicts of interest concerning the study, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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