



A Culture of Caring: The Intersection of Hospital Housekeeping Staff and Person-Centered Care

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Background

Over 400,000 people work as cleaners in the U.S. healthcare system. Spending an average of 11-20 minutes per day in a patient's room, they are a crucial part of infection prevention and safety.

There is little data about their interactions with patients or how they see themselves within the health system.

Study aims:

1. What kinds of interactions do they have with patients?
2. How do they see their impact on patient care within the health system?

Design & Sample

Mixed Methods Exploratory Study

- 8 semi-structured interviews (30-60 min)
- 44 survey respondents

Sample:

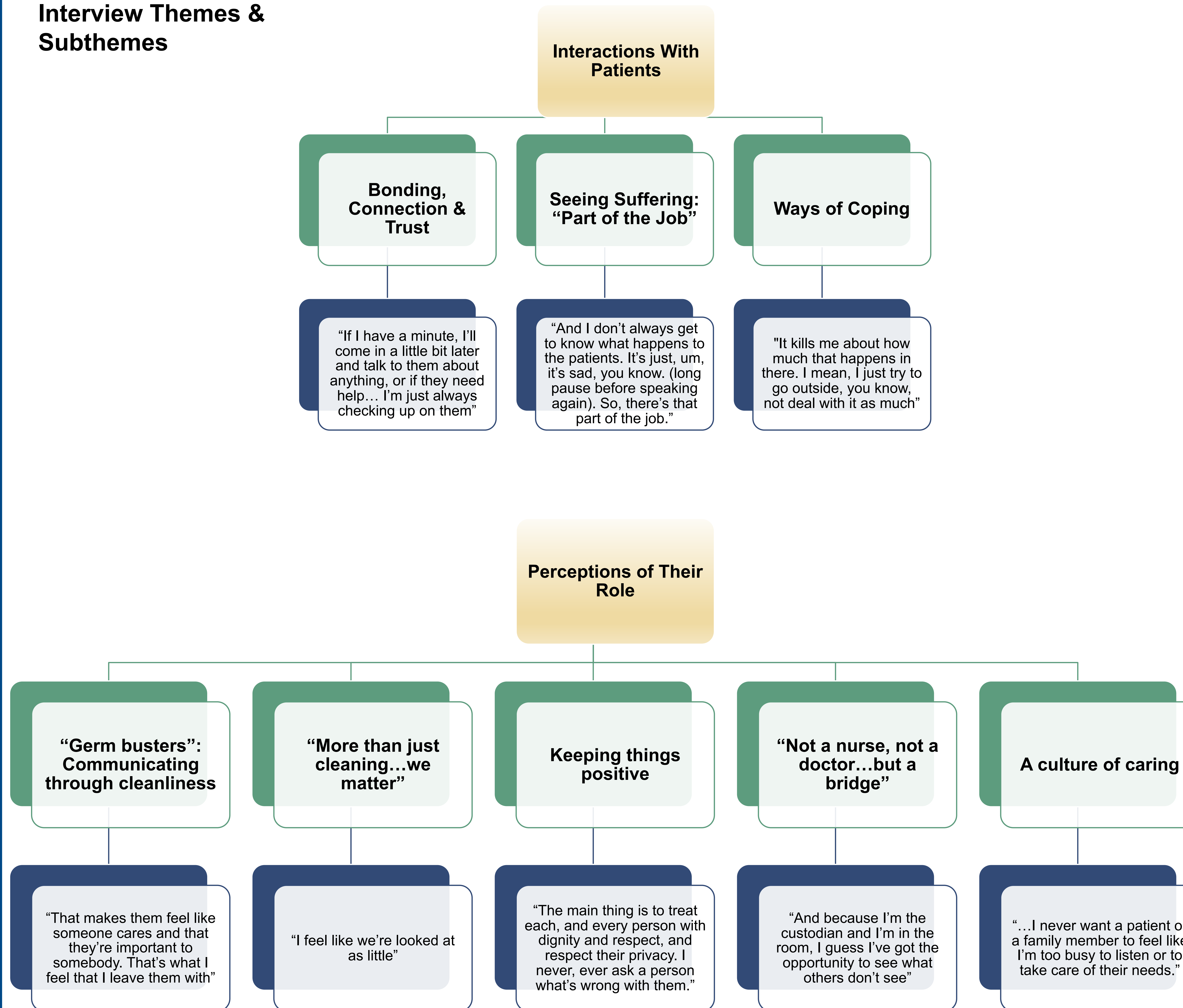
- All shifts worked
- 64% women 36% men
- Employed 3 months to 20 years
- Countries of birth: Fiji, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Panama, Philippines, Thailand, Ukraine, U.S.

Data Analysis

- Thematic analysis
- Investigator triangulation
- Member checking
- Reflective journaling & bracketing

Results

Interview Themes & Subthemes



Summary

- The person-centered care that occurs is distinct from nursing or medical care and is marked by a unique humility and openness.
- Participants were impacted by witnessing the suffering of others and had similar coping methods as other healthcare staff
- They felt the presence of an invisible hierarchy that they were at the bottom of
- They value recognition & appreciation.
- Exposure risk, lack of appreciation and seeing others suffering were the greatest stressors reported

Conclusions

Study findings suggest that there is much to be done in recognizing the care that is occurring and in supporting all members of the healthcare team. It is hoped that this research will encourage more conversations to be had about who is considered a patient caregiver and the invisible hierarchies that are present within hospitals and healthcare systems.

References

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