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Relationship of Staff Engagement and Perception of Safety Scores with Patient Outcomes

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Background

Studies have shown evidence that there is a relationship between higher RN job satisfaction and/or a positive patient safety culture and patient outcomes; but limited studies exist showing a statistically significant relationship. Furthermore, limited studies have been conducted exploring perceptions of nurses and whether there is a relationship between perceptions and actual outcomes.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore clinical nurses' perception of engagement and patient safety along with the evaluation of the correlation between engagement and perception of patient safety to patient outcomes.

Methods

The exploratory component of clinical nurses' perceptions of engagement and patient safety involved a nontraditional qualitative descriptive research design with focus group led by staff nurse unit-based practice council (UBPC) chairs and thematic analysis. The correlational component consisted of parametric statistical analysis of readily available National Database of Nursing Quality Indicators (NDNQI) RN Satisfaction scores, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality Hospital Survey of Patient Safety Culture scores, and patient outcomes data from 2012, 2014, and 2016.

Findings

Findings revealed statistically significant correlated relationships between NDNQI RN satisfaction (as reflected in the practice environment score (PES) and perception safety culture score (PSCS) ($r=0.756$, $p=0.004$) (Graph 1); between RN satisfaction (PES) and patient falls ($r=-0.577$, $p=0.049$) (Graph 2); and between handoff reports (an element of the PSCS) and patient falls ($r=-0.726$, $p=0.008$) (Graph 3). No statistically significant correlation was seen between CAUTI & CLABSI rates and PES or PSCS. Preliminary themes identified from the focus groups include: team building activities, being engaged with patient, teamwork, and being emotionally attached as it relates to engagement; and staffing/assignment, patient care, and teamwork as it relates to safety.

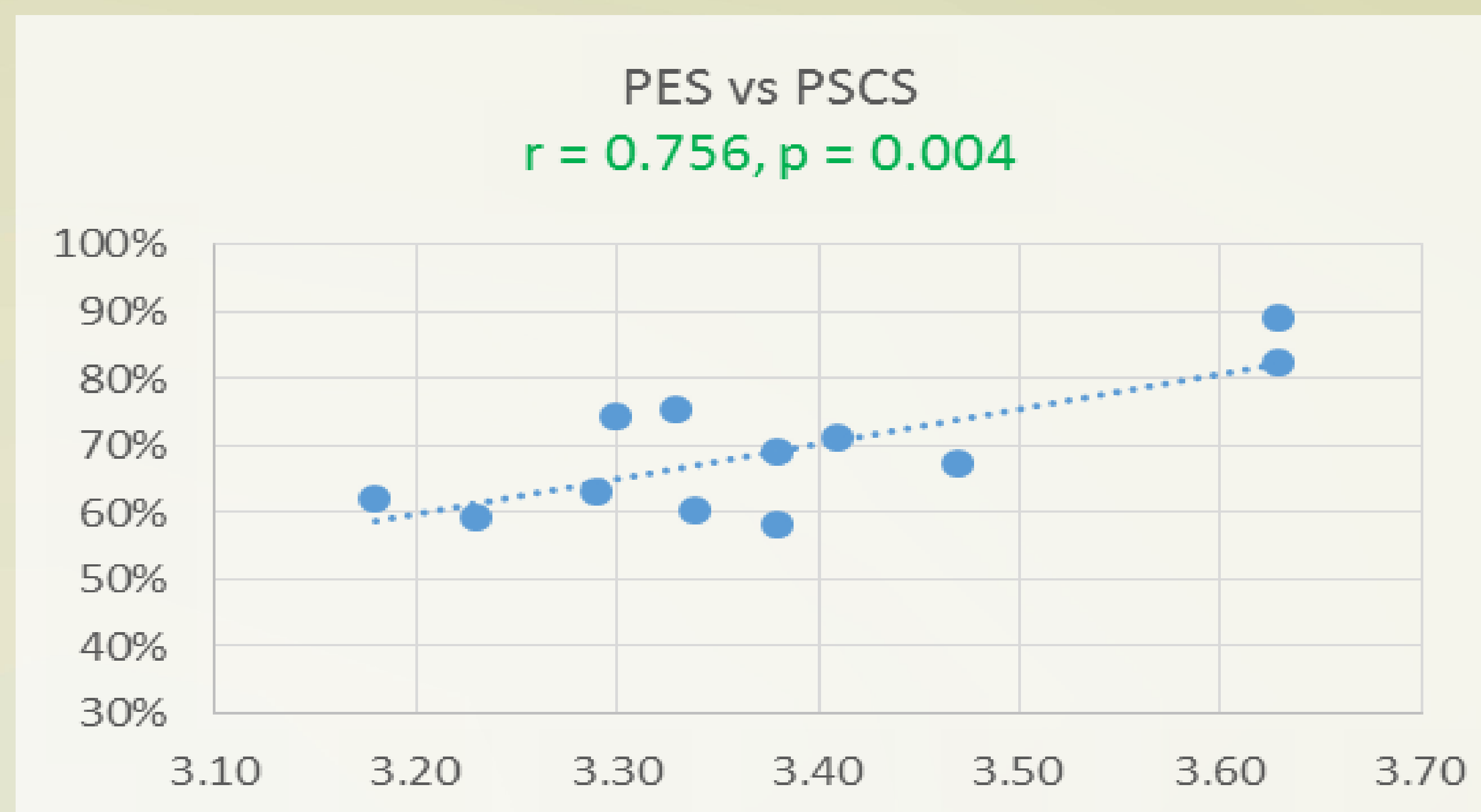
Implications for Practice

By keeping staff engaged and patient safety-centered and focusing on what nurses themselves perceive as elements of staff engagement and patient safety, leaders can potentially positively affect patient outcomes. Having nurses themselves work collaboratively to identify how they affect patient outcomes through a deeper understanding, translates to a stronger safety culture and enhanced patient care.

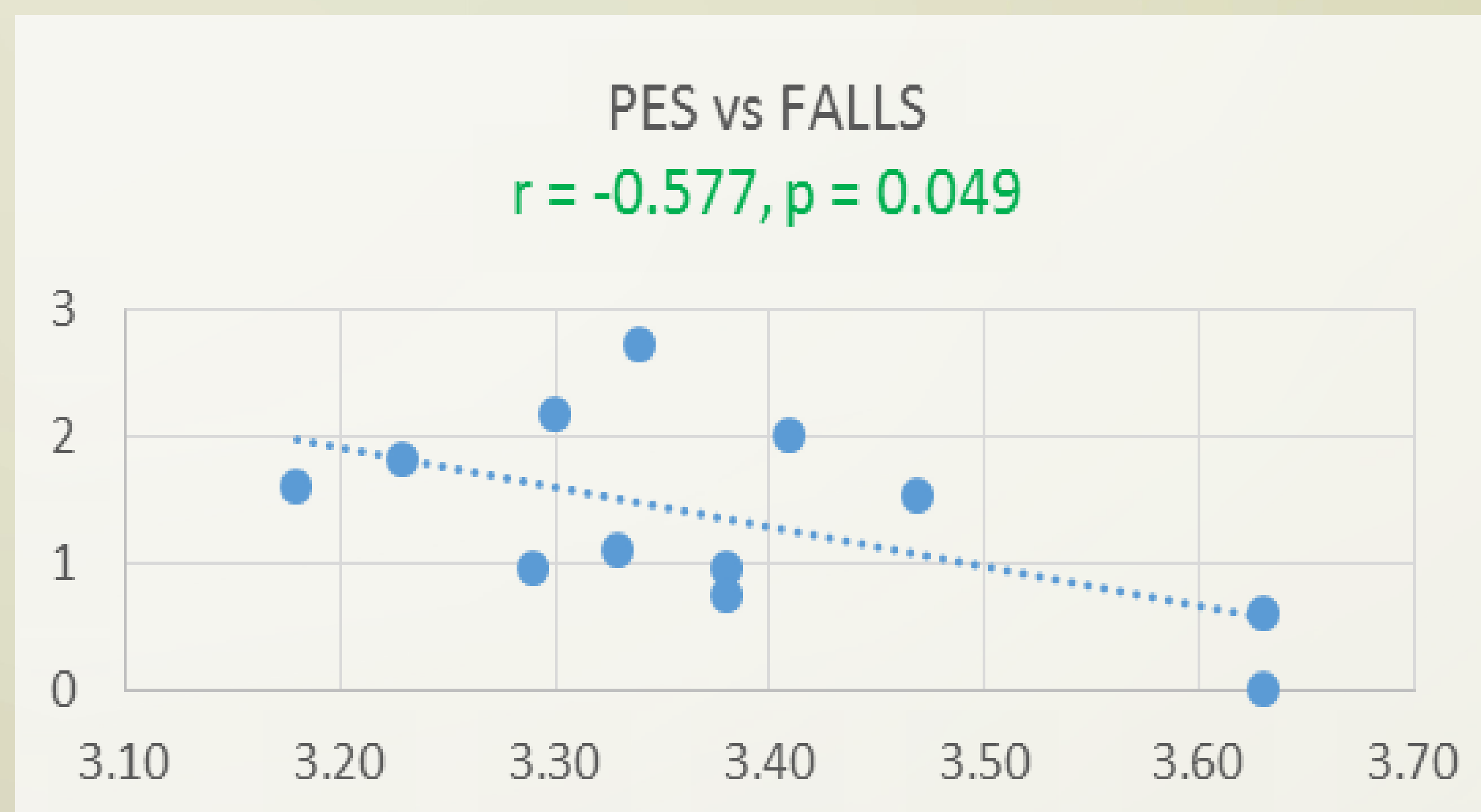
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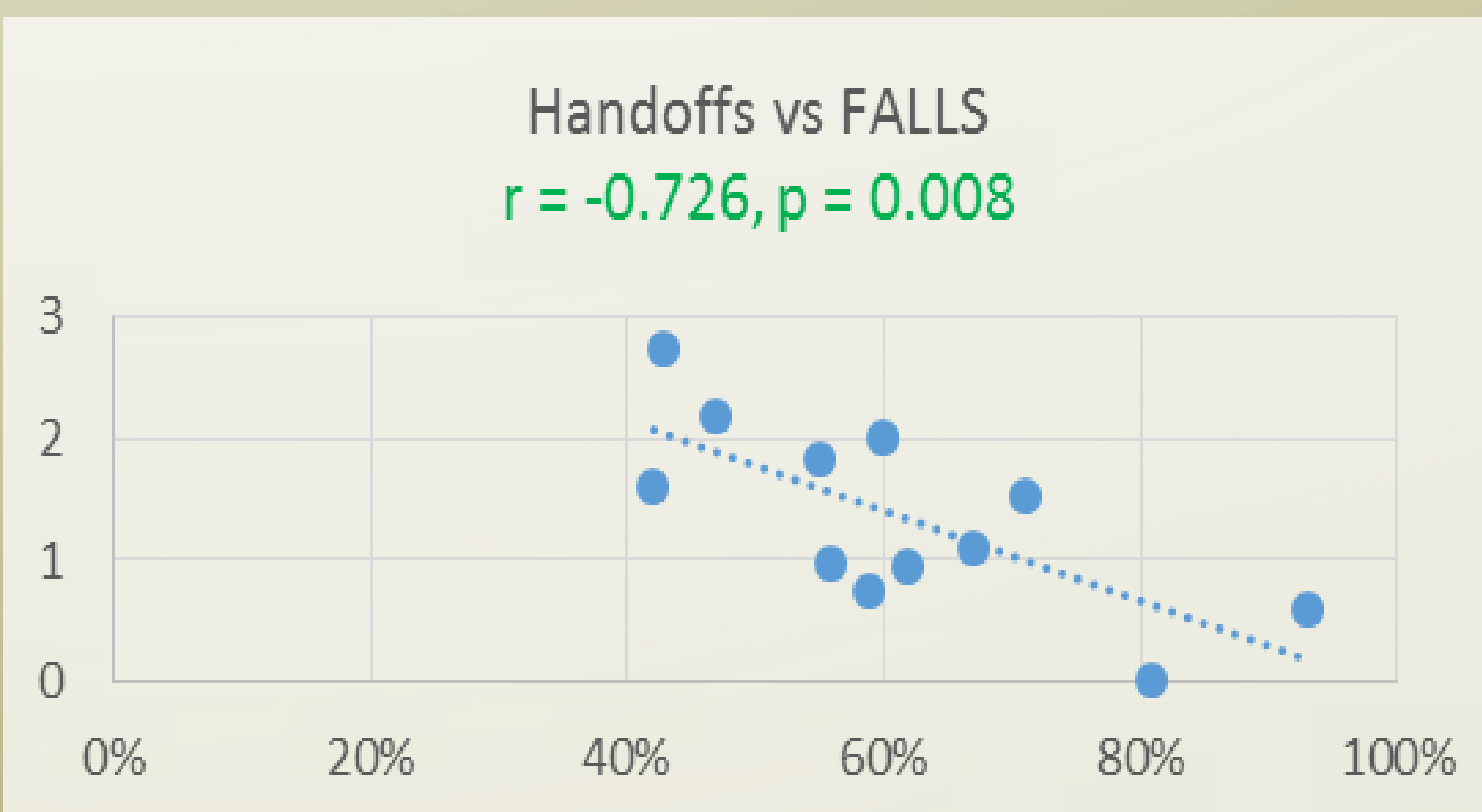
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Graph 1: Correlation between RN satisfaction & perception safety culture score



Graph 2: Correlation between RN satisfaction & patient falls



Graph 3: Correlation between handoff report & patient falls