



Job Satisfaction and Working Environment among Nurses

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Dear Editor-in-Chief

Job satisfaction is a "pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job experiences" (1). Nurses is by far the largest occupational group in the healthcare sector, with nurses accounting for an average of 59% of healthcare professionals (2). The global nursing shortage is a persistent issue that is expected to worsen over time. Data from 2023 from the WHO indicate that Bulgaria, like over half of its member states, has fewer than 4 nurses or midwives per 1,000 people (3). Nurses' job satisfaction is a crucial issue for recruiting and retaining nursing staff in hospitals. Their work, performance, and behaviour establish the conditions that ensure the quality of care and patient satisfaction. The relationship between nursing staff and their specific work environments regarding job satisfaction is reported (4).

The study investigated nursing staff opinions regarding their working environment and job satisfaction among healthcare professionals working in hospitals in the second-largest region in Plovdiv, Bulgaria. A total of 232 nurses were selected from public and private hospitals from September 2022 to September 2023 using systematic random sampling techniques. The study protocol received approval from the Scientific Ethics

Committee of the Medical University - Plovdiv (№R933/15.04.22).

A structured self-administered questionnaire based on the Motivator-Hygiene theory was created, featuring 22 questions for assessment. This questionnaire assesses the importance of the work environment factors and job satisfaction (recognition, organization policy, working hours, job security, responsibility, working conditions, interpersonal relations/teamwork, job prestige, supervisor support, professional growth). Additionally, it collects socio-demographic information about the participants, such as age, gender, marital status, education level, ward, and job position. The dependent variable was nurse job satisfaction on a five-point Likert scale (1 = very dissatisfied, 2 = dissatisfied, 3 = neutral, 4 = satisfied, 5 = very satisfied). The coefficient alpha was 0.83–0.87, and the test-retest correlation coefficient was 0.65 for 6 months. The Cronbach's alpha was 0.87 in this study. To assess the impact of job characteristics on overall satisfaction, items concerning satisfaction with salary were excluded. We refer to Lorber and Savić, who contend that workplace relationships play a more dominant role in overall job satisfaction compared to pay and benefits (5). Data was entered and processed



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using the SPSS software ver. 23 (IBM Corp., Armonk, NY, USA).

The data collected through the questionnaire has yielded valuable insights regarding the tested variable, reflecting the opinions of health workers. Regarding overall job satisfaction, more than half of the respondents were satisfied (n=127, 54.7%). Nurses in private hospitals report higher job satisfaction than those in public hospitals (79.23%; 95% CI: 73.6, 85.8% vs. 27.0% (95% CI: 22.2, 34.1%). Our study confirmed that good interpersonal relationships/ teamwork and recognition are the most significant determinants of nurse satisfaction ($P = 0.000$). Job satisfaction with interpersonal relations/teamwork (AOR = 2.21; 95% CI = 1.38, 3.52), recognition (AOR = 2.04; 95% CI=1.36, 3.05), good working conditions (AOR = 1.63; 95% CI = 1.20, 2.90) and job security (AOR = 1.52; 95% CI = 1.05, 2.27) were significantly associated with overall nurse job satisfaction were after controlling for other factors.

In compliance with Herzberg's theory, working conditions and job security are part of hygiene factors. While these factors do not directly motivate employees, they can lead to satisfaction if managed properly. In contrast, interpersonal relations/ teamwork, and recognition are considered motivation factors because they satisfy an individual's higher needs. When hygiene factors are adequately addressed, motivation factors can enhance job satisfaction and encourage improved performance. Healthcare managers can significantly enhance job satisfaction among nurses if they have adequate knowledge of the factors discussed (6-8).

Job satisfaction among nurses is critically important. It plays a vital role in enhancing the quality of patient care and ensuring safety (9). To build and maintain a highly motivated team of professionals, it is essential to assess their satisfaction with their roles and responsibilities. When employees are satisfied, productivity improves, and they show higher levels of energy and creativity. Also, increased job satisfaction leads to a stronger focus on quality, greater resilience to

stress, reduced absenteeism, lower employee turnover, and a decrease in burnout. A supportive work environment fosters strong relationships among team members, enhances employee retention, and boosts motivation. Ultimately, job satisfaction among nurses is crucial not only for the staff but also for the quality of patient care provided (10).

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the nurses had a limited amount of time to complete the questionnaire, which may have influenced their responses. Second, the information gathered from survey respondents is based on their subjective perceptions, meaning they may have overreported or underreported their levels of satisfaction.

Conflict of interests

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

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