

Job satisfaction among Nurses in a Hospital

Shrestha GK,¹ Singh B²

¹Department of Nursing, Kathmandu University School of Medical Sciences, ²Department of Nursing, Kathmandu University Dhulikhel Hospital, Dhulikhel.

ABSTRACT

Background: Nursing is one of the stressful jobs in health sector. The level of job satisfaction in the profession remains a matter of concern. This study means to explore the job satisfaction among the nurses of Dhulikhel Hospital.

Methods: A Descriptive cross sectional study design was conducted in Dhulikhel Hospital; a community based Hospital of Kathmandu University from January to December 2009. All the nursing staffs that consented to the study filled up a standard questionnaire.

Results: A total of 85 nurses completed the study. The mean age of the respondents' was 23. 80.6% of the nursing staffs were satisfied. "Being considered a resource of health" provided highest sense of satisfaction, while "Lack of opportunities for further education and training" provided lowest sense of satisfaction.

Conclusions: Majority of the nurses were satisfied with their present condition of work. Since job satisfaction is a dynamic process, the result may not be static or consistence. Working environment and employees expectations should receive attention.

Key words: experiences, job satisfaction, level of education, nurse

INTRODUCTION

Job satisfaction is a great concern among nurses. Satisfied employees tend to be more productive, creative, and committed to their employers and recent studies have shown a direct correlation between staff satisfaction and patient satisfaction in a health care organization.¹

Recently, there has been a high turnover of the nurses. This continuous replacement of nursing staffs negatively affects not only the standards of the nursing care but also the quality of the patient care. Job dissatisfaction was the commonest cause for the nurses to give up their job, which led to high turnover and shortage of the nurses.² But, very little is known about nurses in Nepal and their attitude to their job. At a situation when health institutes in the country are falling short of qualified and experienced nurses, knowledge of their

problems and job issues might help to retain and develop a good nursing workforce.

The study aims to find the job satisfaction among nurses working in Kathmandu University Teaching Hospital.

METHODS

A descriptive cross sectional study was conducted in Dhulikhel hospital from January to Decemeber 2009. This hospital is a community based Hospital of Kathmandu University and has been running 315 beds with nine outreaches in and around Kavre district. In 2009, it had 110 nursing staffs in different departments. Ethical consent was taken at the time of interview and with the hospital ethical committee. All the nurses, except those

Correspondence: Geeta Kamal Shrestha, Department of Nursing, Kathmandu University School of Medical Sciences, Dhulikhel, Kavre, Nepal. Email: geetakamal_1@yahoo.com

who were in leave and those who joined the service just within a month, were approached and requested to fill up a structured questionnaire.

This was adapted from a semi structured questionnaire used by Louis Carter in a study conducted in Colombia University on Nurses satisfaction in hospital³ with necessary modifications suitable to our study context. The questionnaire focused on working situation, satisfying aspects of the job, and major problems with their job. The respondents were asked to rate their degree of satisfaction on a five point Likert scale ranging from ‘very satisfied’ to ‘unsatisfied’ including a neutral response choice. In this satisfaction scale, a score below three was categorized as “Dissatisfied” and any score above or equal to three as “Satisfied”.

All the participants were detailed about the nature and objective of the study and they were insured total confidentiality and that didn’t need to write their names and that they could leave any of the questions unanswered if they were uncomfortable with it. Statistical analysis was done with SPSS.

RESULTS

Out of 98 eligible candidates, 85 completed the study. All of the respondents were female and licensed from Nepal Nursing Council (NNC). Their mean age was 23 years and mean working experience was of 31 months and 14.1% of them had less than six months of work experience whereas 34.1% had more than 30 months of work experience. A majority (78.8%) of respondents provided direct nursing care.

Variables	Age	Number (Percentage)
<24 years		67 (11)
25-29 years		7 (78.8)
>29 years		12.9 (8.2)
Completed professional level of education		
Assistant nurse Midwife		4 (4.7)
ProficiencyinCertificate level Nursing		76 (89.6)
Bachelor level Nursing		5 (5.9)
Year of experiences on the job		
< 6 months		12 (14.1)
7-18 months		26 (30.6)
19 -30 months		18 (21.2)
>30 months		29 (34.1)
Major activities at work		
Direct nursing care		67 (78.8)
Direct Nursing care and administration		12 (14.1)
Administration		6 (7.1)

There were 12 statements in the questionnaire, which assessed the satisfaction level of the nurses. Overall, 68 (80.6%) nursing staffs reported being satisfied and 17 (19.4%) being dissatisfied. Assessing the individual statements, 92.2% of the respondents were satisfied with the orientation they received while they started their work, while only 45.1% were satisfied with the present opportunities for additional training and education.

Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation
Satisfaction with orientation	3.34	0.72
Satisfaction with supervisor	3.47	0.81
Satisfaction being considered a resource of Health	3.71	0.82
Satisfaction with working environment	3.16	0.87
Satisfaction with ability to progress within facility	3.07	0.94
Satisfaction with Ability to progress within nursing profession	3.09	0.87
Opportunity to utilize skill and talents	3.06	0.93
Opportunity to learn new skill	3.14	1.04
Opportunity for additional training and education	2.54	1.21
Variety of job responsibility	3.34	0.97
Independence responsibility in work roles	3.59	0.83
Comparison of facility to other	3.12	1.01

On a satisfaction scale of five, the statement “Being considered a resource of health” scored the highest average of 3.71 with standard deviation (SD) 0.82. When asked about opportunities for additional training and education from the institute, majority expressed their dissatisfaction. It scored the lowest average of 2.54 with SD 1.21. Including all 12 statements, the average satisfaction score was 3.21 (Table 2).

Among different problems at work, “Shift hour duty” and “Lack of respect from other profession” were agreed upon by 63 (74.1%) and 62 (72.9%) respondents. Very few (4, 4.7%) respondents agreed that “Patients and families attitude” were bigger problems at work (Table 3).

The study also assessed if the respondents were satisfied with the present working conditions in the study hospital or not. Only 16 (18.8%) of the respondents were satisfied with the current work hours (Table 4).

Table 3. Problem considered by the respondents

Problems at work	Frequency (Percentage)
Staffing	16 (18.8)
Staff attitudes	5 (5.9)
Shift hours	63 (74.1)
Pay/salary	51 (60.0)
Patient and family's attitudes	4 (4.7)
Lack of the respect From other profession	62 (72.9)
Lack of support from management	34 (40.0)
Others	4 (4.5)

Table 4. Respondents' response on working situation on the job

Variables	Number of satisfied individuals (%)
Availability of more than one supervisor/ mentor	60 (70.6)
Agreement with staffing in facility	44 (51.8)
Feeling of role changed than traditional nursing roles	51 (60.0)
Feeling of support from management department	44 (51.8)
Adequate compensations at work	22 (25.9)
Satisfied with hours of work	16 (18.8)
Feeling of difference with availability of supervisor/ mentor	60 (78.8)

DISCUSSION

A total of 80.6% participating nurses were satisfied with their work. Being considered a resource of good health provided highest sense of satisfaction while lack of opportunities for further training and education gave lowest sense of satisfaction. Duty hours and lack of respect from other professions were the most frequently reported problems at work.

Job satisfaction has been defined as a pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job⁴ an affective reaction to one's job.⁵ It is simply how people feel about their jobs and different aspects of the job, the extent to which people like (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their job.⁶ These definitions suggest that job satisfaction is an important indicator of how employees feel about their jobs.⁷ It was found that suppression of the unpleasant emotions decreases job satisfaction and the implication of pleasant emotions increase job satisfaction.⁸ As a frontline health worker, a nurse has to suppress their emotions frequently while

providing service which leads to impact in their emotion and level of the satisfaction in the job.

Weiss supports that there are two main categories of factors that determine job satisfaction.⁵ They are individual factors and job related factors. Individual factor like "Being considered a resource of health" indeed gave a sense of satisfaction to the nurses. On the other hand, availability of supervisor is a job related factor that influenced job satisfaction. 78.8% agreed that availability of supervisors increased their work satisfaction. This may be because, with the help of supervisors, the nursing staffs could learn more and become more competent as nursing is an art and science which needs skills and repeated practice under the supervision to obtain the competency on the job.

Likewise, a large proportion (81.1%) of respondents was dissatisfied with the number of work hours. This calls for recruitment of more staffs so that they could reduce their work hours. But, this requires a high amount of resource, which might be hard for the hospital management to negotiate. At the same time, 51.8% of the respondents reported that they feel supported from the management.

Opportunity for growth and development as well as access to challenge and an increase in knowledge and skill have been found to be keys in motivation towards empowerment.⁹ Lack of opportunity in any form, contributes to negative occupational stress, and limits improvement from within leading dissatisfaction in the job. This has also been reflected in our study where lack of opportunities provided the highest sense of dissatisfaction at work.

At present situation, majority of the health service organizations are facing acute shortage of qualified and experienced nurses. They have not been able to retain the available nursing staffs, majority of whom have been migrating abroad. May be, poor job satisfaction is one of the reasons behind. Therefore, the information about the job satisfaction of the nurses and influencing factors obtained from this study will help to plan appropriate strategies to create and retain a proper nursing workforce.

The study findings could not be generalized because it is a single hospital based study with limited number of participants.

CONCLUSIONS

Majority (80.6%) of the respondents are satisfied with their job. However, long work hours, lack of opportunities for further education and training, and lack of supervisors increased a sense of dissatisfaction among them.

Thus, working environment and employees' expectations should be specially attended if a well organized, motivated and dedicated nursing workforce is to be created.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to the nursing department of the Dhulikhel Hospital.

REFERENCES

1. Al-Aameri AS. Job satisfaction and organizational commitment for nurses. *Saudi Medical J.* 2000;21(6):231-5.
2. Marriner A. *Contemporary nursing management.* St Louis: Mosby; 1980.
3. Louis Carter. Nurses Satisfaction survey in American hospitals. [Online]. 2005 [Cited 2009 Dec 15]. Available from: <http://www.bestpracticeboard.com/nursesurvey.htm>
4. Locke AP, Weiss HM. Organizational behavior: affect in the workplace. *Annual Review of Psychology.* 2001;53:279-307.
5. Weiss HM. Deconstructing job satisfaction: separating evaluations, beliefs and affective experiences. *Human Resource Management Review.* 2002;12:173-94.
6. Spector PE. *Job satisfaction: Application, assessment, cause, and consequences.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications; 1997.
7. Fletcher CE. Hospital RN's job satisfactions and dissatisfactions. *Journal of Nursing Administration.* 2001 Jun;31(6):324-31.
8. Cote S, Morgan LM. A longitudinal analysis of the association between emotional regulation, job satisfaction, and intentions to quit. *Journal of organizational behavior.* 2002;23:947-62.
9. Lashinger HK, Havens DS. The effect of workplace empowerment of staff nurses' occupational mental health and work effectiveness. *Journal of Nursing Administration.* 1997 Jun;27(6):42-50.