

Factors Associated with Job Satisfaction and Intention to Leave among Nurses Working in a Tertiary Healthcare Facility in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Background: The nursing shortage crisis continues to worsen globally, with significant implications for healthcare delivery. This study assessed factors associated with job satisfaction and intention to leave among nurses in a tertiary healthcare facility in Nigeria.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 141 nurses at Federal Medical Centre, Yenagoa, using stratified sampling. Data were collected using a validated questionnaire assessing job satisfaction and intention to leave. Analysis used descriptive and inferential statistics via SPSS version 28.0.

Results: Most respondents (87.2%) were dissatisfied with their current jobs, while 88.7% reported intentions to leave. Key factors influencing satisfaction and turnover intention included salaries (99.3%), working conditions (99.3%), inadequate staffing (90.8%), and poor management attitudes (90.8%). Satisfaction with co-workers was high (93.0%), but organizational support was rated poorly (90.1% dissatisfied).

Conclusion: High levels of job dissatisfaction and turnover intention among nurses were primarily driven by systemic factors like poor remuneration and working conditions. Strategic interventions targeting these factors are needed to enhance retention.

Keywords: Job satisfaction, Turnover intention, Nurses, Healthcare workforce, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Nursing workforce continues to play significant roles in the health sector and in every field of endeavour where they offer care services to the people. They have continued to remain indispensable. However, the shortage of nursing workforce and the need for trained registered nurses has continued to grow globally. The World Health Organization (WHO) in 2020 made known to the public in the first State of the World's Nursing (SOWN) report that the global nursing workforce has a shortfall of over 5million nurses¹. Unfortunately, a significant percentage accounting for over 80% of this nurse shortage was concentrated in low and lower middle nations with enormous gaps in countries in Africa, South-East Asia and Eastern Mediterranean WHO region. Globally, there is an increasing concern about job satisfaction and the intent to leave among nurses, as these two factors have been

reported as major reasons for shortage of nurses.²⁻³ This potentially threatens the function of the health sector especially in developing nations.⁴

Job satisfaction is the degree to which employees feel pleased about their job. It is the attitude and feelings of the people about their work. The job satisfaction of nursing workforce is very vital because it has implication for patient satisfaction.⁵ Job satisfaction is a function of the perceived relationship between what one wants from his or her work and what he or she perceives it is offering, influenced by the person's unique circumstances such as needs, values and expectations.⁶ Nurses' fulfillment in their job roles and work setting is an important construct that nursing leaders, government and employers must pay close attention to. This is because job satisfaction in health care workers can greatly impact on quality, effectiveness and work efficiency and at the same time on healthcare costs.⁷

Available literatures on job satisfaction among nurses in Nigeria shows mixed results, with some reporting high satisfaction, while others an abysmally low level of satisfaction.^{6, 8, 9} Unfortunately, the degree to which nurses are satisfied has been linked to the desire to quit their job. A study conducted by Sasso et al³ found that 35.5% of the nurses intended to leave their current role because of dissatisfaction. Previous studies have reported that satisfaction with job is a predictor of nurses' intention to leave and subsequent turnover.^{10, 11}

The issue of turnover among nurses continue to remain a source of serious concern for healthcare organizations as they are challenged with retaining nurses in their jobs. This situation is particularly overwhelming the healthcare sector especially in Nigeria, where the nursing profession has witnessed unprecedented number of nurses leaving their organizations and seeking greener pastures or better work conditions with another facility or across the shores of the country. Intention to leave is the thought held by an employee where the employee becomes optimistic about finding another role in future and makes plan to resign from the current job.¹² In Ethiopia, the proportion of nurses' working in tertiary hospitals who intend to leave their current job was found to be high.⁴

Though there exists a plethora of reasons nurses harbour the thoughts to leave their current job, mixed results exist in literature. For example, imbalanced of pay with demands, managers lacking personal plan for refining skills, stressful work conditions, health complications, and lack of development opportunities were reported.⁴ Similarly study revealed that lack of satisfaction, the length of years worked at the organization, emotional fatigue, depersonalization, collegial nurse-physician relationships and the adequacy of staffing and resources were predictors of nurses' intention to leave.¹³ Moreover, organisational commitment, practice environment and burnout as influencing factors on intention to leave.¹⁴ In another study, nurses who reported greater job satisfaction, flexible inter professional relationships, and resource availability were less likely to express having feelings about changing their hospital workplaces.¹⁵

The strategies for enhancing nurses' job satisfaction are vital to promote the long-term retention of nurses in their current work setting. In Nigeria, despite the obvious potential impact of nurses terminating their job, evidence regarding intent to leave and the contributing factors as well as nurses' satisfaction with work is scarce in literature. Studies about nurses' job satisfaction and intents to quit current jobs can help understand the relationship between intention to leave and modifiable features of hospital organization and this has the potential to inform strategies to enhance satisfaction and reduce turnover.

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METHODS

Study Design and Setting

A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted at Federal Medical Centre, Yenagoa, between June and July 2024. The facility is a major tertiary healthcare center serving Bayelsa State and surrounding regions.

Sampling and Participants

Using stratified sampling, 141 nurses were selected from eight clinical units. Sample size was calculated using the Taro Yamane formula with 5% precision. Proportional allocation ensured representative sampling from each unit.

Data Collection

A validated four-section questionnaire assessed:

- i. Socio-demographic characteristics
- ii. Job satisfaction (adapted from Spector's Job Satisfaction Index)
- iii. Intention to leave
- iv. Associated factors

The instrument showed good reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.75$).

Statistical Analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS version 28.0. Descriptive statistics summarized frequencies and percentages, while chi-square tests examined relationships between variables at $p < 0.05$ significance level.

RESULTS

Respondents' Socio-demographic characteristics

Table 1: Respondents' Socio-demographic data (n = 141)

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Age (Years)		
Below 25	23	16.3
25 – 30	56	39.7
31 – 35	29	20.6
36 – 40	18	12.8
41 and above	15	10.6
Sex		
Male	11	7.8
Female	130	92.2
Marital status		
Single	59	41.8
Married	77	54.7
Divorced/Separated	5	3.5
Current Position		
Nursing Officer II	8	5.7
Nursing Officer I	13	9.2
Senior Nursing Officer	50	35.4
Principal Nursing Officer	39	27.7
Assistant Chief Nursing Officer	12	8.5
Chief Nursing Officer	9	6.4
Assistant Director of Nursing Services	10	7.1
Duration of Experience (Years)		
1 – 5	24	17.0
6 – 10	92	65.3
11 – 15	20	14.2
16 and above	5	3.5
Highest level of education		
Diploma (RN/RM)	32	22.7
Post Basic Diploma	3	2.1
BSc Nursing	90	63.9
MSc	16	11.3
Monthly take home pay		
Below ₦100,000	16	11.3
₦100,000 – ₦200,000	105	74.5
₦201,000 – ₦300,000	20	14.2

The mean age of participants was 30.78±6.90 years, with 92.2% being female. Majority (65.3%) had 6-10 years of experience, and 63.9% held bachelor's degrees in nursing.

Table 2: Respondents' Level of Job Satisfaction (n = 141)

Satisfaction subscales	Satisfied n (%)	Ambivalent/ Indecisive n (%)	Dissatisfied n (%)
Work	15(10.6%)	31(22.0%)	95(67.4%)
Organizational support	13(9.2%)	1(0.7%)	127(90.1%)
Career development	49(34.8%)	39(27.7%)	53(37.6%)
Salary (pay)	126(89.4%)	2(1.4%)	13(9.2%)
Co-workers	131(93.0%)	5(3.5%)	5(3.5%)
Summary of 5 subscales	16(11.3%)	0(0.0%)	125(88.7%)
Overall rating by respondents	18(12.8%)	0(0.0%)	123(87.2%)

Overall, 87.2% reported dissatisfaction with their current positions. While satisfaction with co-workers was high (93.0%), organizational support received the lowest ratings (90.1% dissatisfied).

Respondents' Intention to Leave

A significant proportion (88.7%) indicated intentions to leave their current positions. This aligned strongly with dissatisfaction levels.

Table 3: Respondents' responses to turnover intention questions n = 141

Items	Yes n (%)	No n (%)
Often think of leaving this hospital	125(88.7)	16(11.3)
Most likely I would resign in coming years	125(88.7)	16(11.3)
I will choose this hospital if asked to seek job again	125(88.7)	16(11.3)

n=frequency

%=percentage

DISCUSSION

Socio Demographic Data The results of the study show that close to 40% of respondents were between 25 – 30years, with a mean age of 30.78 ± 6.90 . Over 90% were females. Findings also showed that approximately half of the respondents were married, while about two-fifth were single. The current position of respondents showed that most of them 50(35.4%) were at the senior nursing officer cadre, followed by 39(27.7%) who were principal nursing officers while nursing officer cadre accounted for only 8(5.7%).

The number of years respondents had worked revealed that majority 92(65.3%) had 6 – 10 years' work experience in their current job, 24(17.0%) had 5years or less experience, 20(14.2%) had worked for 11 – 15years while 5(3.5%) had experience for 16 years or more. The educational level of respondents showed that majority 90(63.9%) were degree holders in nursing, 32(22.7%) held a diploma certificate in nursing, while 3(2.1%) were post basic nursing certificate holders.

Salaries of respondents show that nearly 75% earned between ₦100,000 and ₦200,000. Regarding the respondents' level of job satisfaction, the results of this study show that over two-third of the respondents were satisfied with their co-workers and with their salary/take home pay. In contrast, approximately 90% were dissatisfied with organizational support, while more than 65% of the respondents were dissatisfied with the nature of their work. Overall, the respondents rating of their general job satisfaction shows that over 80% were dissatisfied while only 12.8% were satisfied. This result is expected because the current pay of nurses can hardly take them home and meet their needs considering the inflation and economic realities in the country. This result is in consonance with the findings of other studies, reporting that majority of nurses are not satisfied with their jobs.⁴

Intention to leave current job Findings of this study revealed that over 80% of the respondents had intentions to leave their jobs while only 11.3% have intentions to leave their jobs. This result is not surprising as recent happenings in the country that have seen mass exodus of nurses seeking gainful employment overseas already suggests a state where most nurses are getting frustrated with their jobs and the future prospect it holds for them and their family when compared with what is obtainable in other climes. This study supports the findings of two previous studies which reported that 80.6%, and 40% held the intention to leave their present employment, respectively.^{4, 10}

Factors associated with Job Satisfaction and Intention to Leave Results from this study revealed that 99.3% identified salaries, working conditions and environment, while factors like inadequate staffing, resources and equipment and attitude of management to employees were just 8.5% under those that identified salary as factors influencing their satisfaction and intention to leave the job. This finding supports the result of other researches which report that salary was the most fundamental essential predictor that drive nurses' job satisfaction^{16, 17} These studies also found that advancement and promotion, socio-political climate; administrative and managerial support, autonomy and responsibility, supervision and working condition, recognition and achievement, collectively exert positive relationship with nurses' job satisfaction.

Summary This study assessed the factors associated with job satisfaction and intention to leave among nurses in Federal Medical center, Yenagoa Bayelsa State. The study utilized a descriptive cross-sectional survey of nurses working in surgical ward, medical ward, children wards, General out-patients ward, obstetrics and gynaecology ward, labour ward, theatre and intensive care unit of the Main site of FMC, Yenagoa.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, findings have shown the respondents' rating of their general job satisfaction. Overall, a significant proportion (87.2%) were dissatisfied with their current job while only 12.8% were satisfied. Over 80% of the respondents had intentions to quit their job while only 16(11.3%) claim that they do not have intentions to leave. Salaries,

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working conditions, environment, inadequate staffing, resources, equipment and attitude of management to employees were identified by respondents as factors influencing their satisfaction and intention to leave the job.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following are hereby recommended:

1. Government should collaborate with labour leaders and nursing professional associations to review the salary structure of nurses and through dialogue, come up with an agreeable pay that is fair, and would encourage nurses in their jobs.
2. All stakeholders, especially the hospital management, nursing leaders and government should strive to provide conducive working environment for nurses.
3. Hospital equipment should be audited and where necessary, faulty machines should be replaced while that equipment not available should be provided to motivate nurses in their jobs.

Contribution to Knowledge

This study supported data available in literature, reporting that majority of nurses are not satisfied with their job and had the intention to quit. The study also identified factors associated with job satisfaction and intention to leave among nurses which included salaries, working conditions, environment, inadequate staffing, resources, equipment and attitude of management to employees.

Suggestions for Further Studies

Replication of this study can be extended to other parts of the country for a generalization of findings.

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