

Job satisfaction and organizational commitment for nurses

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: The purpose of this study is to find out the extent to which nurses in public hospitals are satisfied with their jobs and committed to their hospitals. Also, it is intended to assess the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment, as well as to examine the effect of nurses' demographic factors on these 2 variables.

Methods: Two-hundred and ninety nurses working in a number of public hospitals are the sample size. The measures of the study are already tested for validity and reliability. In this study, they are also examined and found to be valid and reliable. The method of data collection used was the questionnaire to include a large sample.

Results: The means and standard deviations show that nurses are satisfied with their jobs to some extent, and they are slightly committed to their hospitals. A strong positive correlation between job satisfaction and

organizational commitment was found at 0.59 ($p < .01$). Also, age is significantly correlated with satisfaction and commitment, but experience is correlated only with the latter. Moreover, analysis of variance shows that nurses differ in their degree of commitment in terms of their marital status and nationality, whereas they differ in their degree of satisfaction only with regard to their nationality.

Conclusion: This study found that nurses in public hospitals are slightly satisfied and committed to their hospitals. Besides, satisfied nurses tend to have a higher degree of commitment than less satisfied ones. However, further research is needed to examine this result before a generalization is made.

Keywords: Job satisfaction, organizational commitment.

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Nowadays, hospitals are confronting great competition and scarcer resources than ever before. They are also severely challenged by the external and internal environment to achieve their goals effectively and efficiently. Nurses, as the largest group of professionals, play an important role in determining the quality and cost of healthcare. It is argued that they have the potential to be part of solutions to key problems in health care systems.¹ Issues such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment for nurses are of paramount importance for administrators and managers in health organizations due to the crucial role they play in their organizations' performance. Nurses' job satisfaction and organizational commitment are found to

influence hospital performance and productivity. Research has generally found that satisfied employees are more productive and committed to their jobs, whereas dissatisfied ones experience absenteeism, grievances and turnover.² In the nursing profession, moreover, job satisfaction was found to be positively correlated with a number of variables including patient satisfaction and quality of care.² This study is intended to examine the level of job satisfaction and organizational commitment for nurses in public hospitals in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. While there are many studies conducted on satisfaction and commitment worldwide, no study was found to examine this topic in public hospitals in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, the purpose of this study is

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to bridge this gap and provide answers to the following questions: 1. To what extent are nurses satisfied with their jobs? 2. To what extent are nurses committed to their hospitals? 3. What are the relationship between nurses' satisfaction and organizational commitment? 4. To what degree do demographic factors influence nurses' satisfaction and commitment?

Literature review. Since the Hawthorne studies, job satisfaction and commitment to employing organizations have received a great deal of attention from both academicians and practitioners. This is largely due to their significant impact on organization and individual behaviors. It was found that employee attitudes toward satisfaction and commitment are indicators to the solidarity between organizational members and management.¹ Job satisfaction is widely researched and researchers vary in their definitions to the concept. Smith² defines it as the feelings of individuals about their jobs. In the broadest sense, Knoop³ stated that it refers to an employees general attitude toward the job or some dimensions of it. Cumbey and Alexander⁴ consider it as "an effective feeling that depends on the interaction of employees, their personal characteristics, values, and expectations with the work environment, and the organization".

Research has shown that job satisfaction or dissatisfaction leads to a number of consequences. It was revealed by many studies^{2,3,5} that satisfaction leads to more productivity, high quality of care and intent to remain in the organization. On the other hand, job dissatisfaction was found to increase absenteeism, turnover, high stress, and grievances.² The antecedents of job satisfaction are also examined by a number of studies.^{1,6,7} One of the sounding studies in this regard is Herzberg's two-factor theory of job satisfaction. He distinguished between factors leading to satisfaction and those leading to dissatisfaction. Of the factors that increase satisfaction are recognition for achievement, work itself, advancement, etc. The factors that influence dissatisfaction are organizational policy and administration, supervision, salary, interpersonal relationship, etc.⁶ In addition, empirical research shows that leadership (democratic or autocratic), pay and working conditions, workload factors are determinants of job satisfaction.⁷

Organizational commitment is one of the organizational concepts that has widely been examined in administrative literature due to its importance for organizational performance and effectiveness. Organizational commitment is seen as the degree to which an employee is loyal to their organization. It is characterized by 3 factors "acceptance of the organization's values; willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organization; and desire to remain an employee of the organization".⁸ Mowday and Steers⁹ consider it as "the relative

strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization". Organizational commitment was found to have significant consequences on turnover, productivity and satisfaction. In a study conducted by Kersch,⁵ it was revealed that organizational commitment was positively correlated with nurses' intent to remain in the organization. This result is consistent with what Porter et al¹⁰ found. They reported that commitment is a better indicator of leavers and stayers. Research also found that commitment is affected by a number of factors such as leadership, job stress, and organizational justice.^{11,12} Almeer¹² found negatively significant relationships between role conflict and ambiguity and organizational commitment. This means as the role conflict and ambiguity increase, employees' degree of commitment decreases. Alajmi¹¹ asserted that organizational commitment is correlated significantly with employees' feelings of fair treatment and fair procedure.

The relationship between organizational commitment and job satisfaction is also researched in many professions. Most of these studies whether in the nursing profession or other professions found a positively significant relationship between them.^{2,3,5,12} This leads us to hypothesize in this study that nurses' job satisfaction and organizational commitment are positively related to one another.

Methods. This study was conducted in public hospitals in Riyadh city. Using the non-probability sampling technique and accidental sampling methods, 400 nurses were selected from a number of public hospitals to complete the designed questionnaire. Two hundred and ninety nurses completed the questionnaire and the rest did not return it for unknown reasons. The response rate was 72.5% which is very much acceptable in social research.¹³ The participants were 220 females and 64 males with a mean age of 34.6 years. These were 150 married, 84 single, 26 divorced and 25 widowed. The sample also represented different nationalities such as Saudi, Arab, Filipino, Indian, American, and European. The average experience of the participants in their present hospitals was 5.3 years.

Instrument. The instrument used in this study is composed of 3 parts. Part one deals with organizational commitment. Commitment is measured using Mowday and Steers's scale.⁹ It includes 15 statements that represent possible feelings that individuals might have about the organization for which they work. The response categories were: strongly agree (7), agree (6), slightly agree (5), neither agree nor disagree (4), slightly disagree (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1). The measure used was tested for validity and reliability in many different professions, including nursing.^{2,3,9} In this study, the score of Cronbach's

Table 1 - Mean and standard deviations of satisfaction and commitment.

| Variable | Mean | Standard deviation |
|---------------------------|------|--------------------|
| Job Satisfaction | 3.67 | 0.51 |
| Organizational commitment | 4.87 | 0.94 |

alpha was found at 0.80. Part 2 includes job satisfaction which is measured using Brayfield and Rothe's scale of general satisfaction.⁸ This measure consists of 18 items that describe how individuals feel about their present job. The response categories are five, which range from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). The measure is tested for validity and reliability and it was found valid and reliable.⁸ In this study, the score of Cronbach's alpha was found at 0.75. Part 3 includes a number of demographic questions such as age, marital status, experience, education, and nationality.

Procedures of data collection. Four hundred nurses working in a number of public hospitals in Riyadh city were contacted and a copy of the questionnaire is delivered to them. A letter from the researcher explaining the purpose of the study, data confidentiality and how the questionnaire should be filled out was attached. Having collected all the questionnaires, a major revision and coding were carried out, which was followed by computer feeding. The statistical package used to analyze the data was SPSS for Windows. After that, a number of statistical techniques were employed to answer the research questions.

Results. To answer the research questions a number of statistical techniques were used. Descriptive analyses were conducted first to answer the study questions relevant to the level of job satisfaction and organizational commitment for nurses in public hospitals. The means and standard deviations for these 2 variables are presented in Table 1. Table 1 indicates that the majority of nurses

in public hospitals tend to be satisfied with their jobs as the mean of 3.67 shows. However, a few of them are not satisfied as the standard deviation of 0.51 indicates. Because the group is not large, one can deduce from these statistics that most nurses tend to have positive attitudes toward their jobs. However, nurses' response variation may refer to personal differences which will be analyzed later on.

It is also indicated in Table 1 that most nurses are slightly committed to their employing hospitals as the mean of 4.87 shows. The variation among nurses' responses as indicated by the standard deviation of 0.94 is large. This indicates that some nurses are strongly committed to their organizations, while others are not loyal to their hospitals. Still, there is a number of them neither committed nor uncommitted to their employing institutions (they have no attitudes). Perhaps this variation relates to some personal factors as upcoming analysis may reveal.

To assess the relationship between the study variables, the correlation coefficients among the different variables were computed. Presented in Table 2, the result shows a number of significant correlations among the study variables. Job satisfaction and organizational commitment are found to be positively related to one another. The correlation coefficient was found at 0.59, indicating a significant relationship between these 2 variables. This result means that nurses who are satisfied with their jobs tend to show a high degree of commitment to their employing hospitals. On the contrary, nurses who are dissatisfied with their jobs tend to show less loyalty to their hospitals. No relationship between satisfaction and the other demographic variables was found except for age (0.23). This result means that old nurses are found to be more satisfied than young nurses. This can be attributed to the fact that young nurses have just joined their organizations and they face a lot of challenges at the beginning of their career. Organizational commitment is significantly correlated with age and experience and no correlation was found with the rest of the variables. The correlation with age was 0.15 and with experience 0.18. This means that old and experienced nurses

Table 2 - Correlations among study variables.

| Variable | Satisfaction | Commitment | Age | Experience | Education |
|----------------------|--------------|------------|-----------------------|------------|-----------|
| Satisfaction | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Commitment | 0.59** | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Age | 0.23** | 0.15* | -- | -- | -- |
| Experience | 0.07 | 0.18** | 0.41** | -- | -- |
| Education | 0.13 | 0.01 | 0.02 | 0.00 | -- |
| *Significant at 0.05 | | | **Significant at 0.01 | | |

Table 3 - ANOVA for nationality and organizational commitment.

| Nationality | n | Mean | Standard deviation | Standard error | F ratio |
|--|-----|------|--------------------|----------------|---------|
| Saudi | 29 | 4.8 | 0.91 | 0.17 | 3.29** |
| Arab | 31 | 5.3a | 0.61 | 0.11 | |
| Filipino | 110 | 5.0 | 0.87 | 0.08 | |
| Indian | 30 | 4.9 | 0.75 | 0.14 | |
| European | 26 | 4.4a | 1.00 | 0.19 | |
| American | 13 | 4.5 | 1.54 | 0.43 | |
| ** significant at 0.01 a - indicates that there is a difference between these two groups | | | | | |

Table 4 - ANOVA for marital status and satisfaction.

| Nationality | n | Mean | Standard deviation | Standard error | F ratio |
|---|-----|-------|--------------------|----------------|---------|
| Single | 76 | 3.60 | 0.49 | 0.06 | 5.21** |
| Married | 132 | 3.74a | 0.52 | 0.05 | |
| Divorced | 20 | 3.83a | 0.26 | 0.06 | |
| Widowed | 19 | 3.37b | 0.43 | 0.10 | |
| ** significant at 0.01 a, b - indicates that there is a difference between these two groups | | | | | |

Table 5 - ANOVA for marital status and commitment.

| Nationality | n | Mean | Standard deviation | Standard error | F ratio |
|--|-----|-------|--------------------|----------------|---------|
| Single | 81 | 4.76 | 0.92 | 0.10 | 3.35** |
| Married | 139 | 4.99a | 0.82 | 0.07 | |
| Divorced | 21 | 4.86 | 0.80 | 0.17 | |
| Widowed | 20 | 4.34a | 1.55 | 0.35 | |
| ** significant at 0.01 a - indicates that there is a difference between these two groups | | | | | |

tend to be more loyal and committed to their employing hospitals than young and less experienced ones.

To find out the relationship between nationality and marital status as demographic variables and satisfaction and organizational commitment, one way Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted, and the results are shown in Table 3. The results presented in Table 3 illustrate that there are significant differences among the different nationals as the F ratio of 3.29 ($p < .01$) indicates. This means that the level of nurses' commitment to their hospitals differ according to their nationality. One can see from Table 3 that Arab nurses are more committed to their hospital than other nationalities. But when the Scheffee procedure was conducted, the only difference found was between Arab nurses and European ones. Europeans were found to be less committed than Arab ones. The other nationalities did not differ from one another or from these 2 groups. However, this result needs to be further examined before it can be generalized. With regard to satisfaction, ANOVA did not show any significant differences among nurses' different nationalities.

The association between marital status and satisfaction and commitment was examined using ANOVA. Table 4 shows the relationship between marital status and job satisfaction. As indicated in Table 4, ANOVA shows that there are significant differences among the 4 groups regarding their degree of job satisfaction. The least satisfied group is the widowed one and the most satisfied group is the divorced one. When running Scheffee procedure, it was found that the widowed group differed from married and divorced groups but not with the single group. Also, the single group did not differ from the other 3 groups. Further research is needed to examine this result. To examine the relationship between marital status and organizational commitment, ANOVA was conducted. Table 5 indicates the results of this test. The F-ratio of 3.35 ($P < .05$) shows that there are significant differences among the different groups in terms of their feelings toward their hospitals. However, Scheffee procedure pinpoints that the only significant difference occurred is between the married group and the widowed one, where married nurses shows more commitment than widowed ones. The rest of the groups did not differ from one another. We should be cautious to generalize this result until sufficient evidence is provided.

Discussion. The purpose of this research is to examine the extent to which nurses are satisfied with their jobs and committed to their hospitals. Also, it is intended to find out the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment and the effect of some of the demographic variables on these

2 variables. The results presented above can be discussed as the following: First, most nurses generally tend to be satisfied with their jobs. A few nurses are found not to be satisfied. This means that the work nature and environment in public hospitals is good enough for nurses. However, officials in these hospitals should give more consideration to nurses' satisfaction due to its tremendous consequences. Second, most nurses slightly agree that they are committed to their employing hospitals. This means that their degree of loyalty to their hospitals is not strong enough, which gives sufficient belief to say that if they find a good offer elsewhere they will leave their hospitals. Public hospitals must work to improve nurses' commitment and loyalty. Third, a strong positive relationship between satisfaction and organizational commitment is found. This means that satisfied nurses tend to show high degree of commitment to their hospitals, whereas dissatisfied ones tend to have low degree of loyalty. This result is consistent with the findings of previous studies.^{2,3,12} Also, the findings show that old nurses are more satisfied and committed than young ones. Besides, more experienced nurses are found to be committed to their organizations. If this result is proven to be correct, officials in public hospitals should consider this in their selection and hiring of nurses. Fourth, the nationality of a nurse has some influence on his or her commitment. It was found that some nationalities are more committed to their hospitals than other. Arab nurses were found to be the most committed group to their hospitals. The least committed group were the European ones. This may refer to cultural differences, where Arab nurses may find the lifestyle in Saudi Arabia and the work environment similar to their home countries; therefore, they exhibit a high degree of commitment. However, this result needs to be further investigated before it can be generalized due to the fact that the number of nurses in each group is not similar. Fifth, job satisfaction and organizational commitment are found to be influenced by nurses' marital status. Widowed nurses are found to be the least satisfied and committed to their hospitals, whereas the divorced ones are the most satisfied and the married nurses are the most committed group. The lifestyle of each group may explain these results;

nevertheless, more research is needed to examine these findings.

In conclusion, this study provides new support to previous research about the importance of satisfaction and commitment for organizational effectiveness and performance. It also provides further evidence that the more satisfied the employees are the more committed they will be to their organizations, and the more they will be productive and effective in their organizations. This gives a clear message to all administrators and managers in all healthcare organizations to pay considerable attention to the issue of job satisfaction and organizational commitment for nurses and other employees in their institutions.

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