

## Socio-Demographic Correlates of Job Satisfaction and Perceived Factors Influencing Nurses Turnover in Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital Zaria Kaduna State, Nigeria

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### Original Research Article

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**Abstract:** Workplace turnover is destructive to nursing and patient outcomes as it leads to losing competent and qualified nurses. However, developments of coping strategies demand a clear understanding of workplace variables that either motivates nurses to remain employed or lead them to leave their current jobs. This study assessed the relationship between socio-demographic characteristics of members of nursing staff and their job satisfaction as well as perceived factors influencing turnover among nurses in Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital Zaria, Nigeria. Cross-sectional study design was carried out on 304 nurses using quantitative data collection methods from 8<sup>th</sup> April, 2016 – 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 2016. The respondent's age ranged between 20-63 years with a mean age of 39±10.97 years. Age, gender, marital status; and job satisfaction yielded a non-statistical significant, weak and positive correlation with job satisfaction. Number of years worked, professional experience and unit of primary assignment were the only socio-demographic characteristics found to be significant predictors of job satisfaction in ABUTH ( $P < 0.05$ ). Insufficient cohesion with colleagues, poor safety of the work environment; undervalued nurse's opinion by medical staff and poor professional image of nursing were identified as perceived factors positively influencing nurse's intention to leave the hospital. The study suggests that nurses' opinion should be respected by other professionals and nurses professional practice judgement should not be relegated on the bases of sentiments.

**Keywords:** Job satisfaction, Perceived factors, Nurses turnover.

### INTRODUCTION

Recruitment, retention, turnover, and development of quality care in nursing are global issues within the health care setting [1]. Although the definition of turnover varies according to different literature, employee turnover is defined as the ratio of the number of workers that had to be replaced in a given time period to the average number of workers [2], and generally viewed as the movement of staff out of an organization [3].

Employee job satisfaction is a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences [4]. Job satisfaction describes how content an individual is with his or her job. The happier people are within their job, the more satisfied they are said to be and the less contemplation of quitting the job [5]. The most common way of measurement of job satisfaction is the use of rating scales where employees report their reactions to their

jobs. Questions relate to rate of pay, work responsibilities, variety of tasks, promotional opportunities in the work itself, and co-workers [6].

According to Herzberg's two-factor theory of job satisfaction, people are made dissatisfied by a bad work environment hence intention to leave, but they are seldom made satisfied by a good environment [7]. This implies that, the prevention of job dissatisfaction among workers in any organisation is sine qua non to workers retention and avoidance of turnover. Investigating possible changes over time in sources of dissatisfaction revealed that factors related to the work environment and individual or demographic factors were of most importance to nurses' turnover in many organizations [6]. The differences found to occur across work settings necessitates analysis of job satisfaction at ward level, and the contribution of qualitative methods to develop more insight in handling issues of turnover. Predictors of registered nurse (RN) turnover have included intent

to leave, nurse job dissatisfaction, salary, fewer years on the job, not enough time to do the job well, and demographic characteristics [8].

Nigeria is naturally endowed with both human and natural resources. Unfortunately, despite these leverages, the quality of Nigerian' healthcare system is in constant deterioration [9]. The Nigerian healthcare milieu is increasingly becoming volatile with unpleasant scenarios such as decreased job satisfaction, incessant industrial actions among nurses, decrease in quality of care which is observed to be the cause of massive exodus of Nigerians to access medical care abroad and increased rate of maternal and child mortality among others [10-12]. The healthcare system in Nigeria is faced with many challenges including unfair distribution of the nursing workforce, increasing "brain drain" culminating into shortage of skilled and competent nursing workforce. Furthermore, poor human resources planning, mismanagement practices and structures, unsatisfactory working conditions, political crises, and terrorism among others are also challenges affecting the Nigerian healthcare system [13, 11].

Anecdotal evidence shows Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital (ABUTH) is one of the tertiary hospitals in the north-western Nigeria most hit with problem of turnover among nurses. This is more so when the frequent industrial actions and emigration of high nursing staff are considered. Knowing nurses tendency and difficulties will help prevent the nurses job satisfaction and conversely prevent turnover. This study assessed the relationship between socio-demographic characteristics of members of nursing staff and their job satisfaction as well as perceived factors influencing turnover among nurses in ABUTH.

## METHODS AND MATERIALS

A non-experimental cross-sectional descriptive survey design was adopted for the study.

### Study Setting

The research was conducted in Ahmadu University Teaching Hospital Zaria, Kaduna State. Kaduna State is located in the north-western part of Nigeria. The hospital provides a broad range of tertiary services to meet the healthcare needs of people from the catchment area and the country at large, it also provide technical support to primary and secondary health facilities within its area of operation as well as facilities for the training of different cadres of health workers. The hospital also serves as a centre for the conduct of relevant researches into prevalent health and health related problems. The hospital has 695 nurses under the department of nursing services. These nurses are spread across various units under the department of nursing services. The nursing department is headed by the

assistant director of nursing services while various nursing units are headed by Chief Nursing Officers.

### Target Population

The target population was the entire professional nurses working in ABUTH. Participants were drawn from the various nursing units of the hospital.

### Inclusion Criteria

Nurses trained and licensed by the Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria and who have worked in ABUTH for more than six months were included in the study.

### Exclusion Criteria

Professional nurses who have not worked up to six months in ABUTH, Nurses on leave and Student nurses on training were excluded from the research.

### Sample Size

The sample size of 325 professional nurses in ABUTH was determined using power analysis. Sample size was calculated using this formula: Sample size =  $n / [1 + (n/\text{population})]$ , where  $n = z^2 p q / d^2$ . Confidence interval of 95% and 30.3% prevalence rate of job satisfaction from one of the previous studies was used [14].

### Sampling Technique

Stratified random sampling technique was employed to recruit participants for the study. The researchers represented each Unit as a stratum to participate in the study by having their names written in a paper squeezed and put together on a table while a nurse on duty was requested to handpick at random and replace for the avoidance of bias. Six out of 26 units were picked. The units picked includes; medical, surgical, emergency, obstetrics and gynaecology, ancillary and compound services. Selection of participants from the six units was done by proportionate allocation followed by systematic random sampling after obtaining the sampling frame. Nurses that met the stipulated inclusion criteria and accepted to participate in the study by signing the informed consent form were served with copies of the questionnaire. Data collection process lasted for two weeks (8<sup>th</sup> April, 2016 – 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 2016). Two research assistants were trained to assist the researchers in data collection.

### Instrumentation

The study adopted Revised Nursing Work Index (NWI – R) questionnaire for data collection. Nursing Work Index questionnaire was originally developed by Kramer and Hafner and revised by Aiken and Patrician [15] with the reliability coefficient of 0.69. However, in this study, some modifications were made to the NWI – R to make it more contextual and

the four Likert scale was also collapsed into dichotomous scale. Other added items were nurses' socio – demographic characteristics and perceived factors that could influence nurses' turnover. The final version of the instrument consisted of section A, B, C and D. Section A – Demographic Characteristics – 9 questions, Section B - Descriptions of factors which either their absence or presence could influence nurses' level of job satisfaction (motivation / intrinsic factors) comprise 20 questions, Section C consist of descriptions of factors which either their absence or presence could influence nurses' level of job dissatisfaction (hygiene / extrinsic factors) comprising 26 questions and Section D consisted of 11 questions prompting perceived factors that could influence of nurses. The instrument was pretested among 20 professional nurses from University of Abuja Teaching Hospital, Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria. The Cronbach alpha of the modified questionnaire was 0.66.

### Data analysis

Data collected was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 21. Descriptive and inferential statistics was used to answer research questions. Pearson correlation was used as a statistical tool at 95% level of confidence to determine the correlation between variables.

### RESULTS

A total of 304 valid copies of the questionnaire were analysed. The respondent's age ranged between

20-63 years with a mean age of  $39 \pm 10.97$  years and a modal group of 31 to 41 years. Majority 226 (74.3%) of the respondents were married, 74(24.3%) of the respondents were single; 1(0.3%) were divorcees while 3(1.0%) were widowed. In terms of highest educational qualification, 83(27.3%) of the respondents were diploma holders. 124 (40.8%) were holders of post basic diploma, 93(30.4%) were Bachelor's Degree holders, while holders of Post graduate diploma and Master's diploma were both 2(0.7%). Concerning designation, 3(1%) of the respondents were Directors of Nursing Services. 136 (44.7%) were Chief Nursing Officers. 43(14.1%) of the respondents were Assistant Chief Nursing Officers. 12 (3.9%) were Principal Nursing Officers; 43(14.1%) were Senior Nursing Officers, 49(16.1%) were Nursing Officer I while 5.9% were Nursing Officer II (Table-2).

The mean working hours per week of the respondents was  $46.059 \pm 12.3906$  while the mean years worked by the respondents in ABUTH was  $13 \pm 9.94$ . The respondent's age in nursing profession ranged between one and forty years with a modal age group of one to ten. Majority 95(31.3%) of the respondents were in Medical unit, 86(28.3%) were in surgical Unit; 35(11.5%) were in Emergency Unit while 31(10.2%) were in Obstetrics and Gynaecology Units. Others includes; 18 (5.9%) of the respondents in Ancillary units and 39(12.8%) in Compound Services (Table-2).

**Table-1: The Correlation Co-efficient (r) between Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondents and Job Satisfaction**

Socio-demographic Characteristics	Correlation Coefficient (r)	P value
Gender	0.063	0.273
Age	0.100	0.082
Marital status	0.069	0.233
Highest Educational qualification	-0.080	0.165
Current designation	-0.085	0.141
Working hours per week	-0.081	0.161
Number of years worked	0.168	0.003*
Nursing Professional experience	0.184	0.001*
Department/Unit	0.142	0.013*

Table-1 shows that, there is a weak correlation between all the examined socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents and job satisfaction. The correlation is negative in highest educational qualification, current designation and number of years

worked in ABUTH. At 95% level of confidence, the correlation is statistically significant in number of years worked, nursing professional experience and department/unit ( $P < 0.05$ ).

Table-2: Distribution of Respondents According to their Socio-demographic Characteristics (n=304)

Gender	Frequency	%
Male	106	34.9
Female	198	65.1
<b>Age range (years)</b>		
20 to 30	85	28.0
31 to 41	102	33.6
42 to 52	78	25.7
53 to 63	39	12.8
(Mean age = $39 \pm 10.97$ )		
<b>Marital status</b>		
Single	74	24.3
Married	226	74.3
Divorced	01	0.3
Widow	03	1.0
<b>Highest education Qualification</b>		
Diploma(RN/RM)	83	27.3
Post Basic Diploma	124	40.8
Bachelor's Degree	93	30.6
Post graduate Diploma	2	0.7
Master's Degree	2	0.7
<b>Current Designations</b>		
Director of Nursing Services(DNS)	3	1.0
Chief Nursing Officer(CNO)	136	44.7
Assistant Chief Nursing Officer(ACNO)	43	14.1
Principal Nursing Officer (PNO)	12	3.9
Senior Nursing Officer (SNO)	43	14.1
Nursing Officer I (NO I)	49	16.1
Nursing Officer II (NO II)	18	5.9
<b>Working hours per week</b>		
1-10	04	1.3
11-20	04	1.3
21-30	14	4.6
31-40	99	32.6
41-50	29	9.5
51-60	145	47.7
71-80	09	3.0
(Mean working hours = $46.059 \pm 12.3906$ )		
<b>Number of years worked at ABUTH</b>		
1-10	175	57.6
11-20	55	18.1
21-30	45	14.8
31-35	26	8.6
36 and above	03	1.0
(Mean years worked in ABUTH = $13 \pm 9.94$ )		
<b>Nursing profession experience (years)</b>		
1-10	144	47.4
11-20	80	26.3
21-30	45	14.8
31-35	30	9.9
36 and above	05	1.6
<b>Department/Unit</b>		
Medical	95	31.3
Surgical	86	28.3
Emergency	35	11.5
Obstetrics and Gynaecology	31	10.2
Ancillary units	18	5.9
Compound Services	39	12.8

**Table-3: Respondents' Perceived Factors Influencing Nurses Turnover (n=304)**

Perceived Turnover factors	Agreed		Disagreed	
	f	%	f	%
Insufficient group cohesion with colleagues	220	72.4	84	27.6
Non-recognition of nurses' additional qualification	171	56.3	133	43.7
Poor safety of the work environment	229	75.3	75	24.7
Nurses' opinion are undervalued by medical staff	226	74.3	78	25.7
Poor professional image of nursing	230	75.7	74	24.3
May change due to poor advancement within the same organization if given the opportunity	183	60.2	121	39.8
Consider changing current organization due to poor salary	167	54.9	137	45.1
Quit nursing practice because of poor policy and administration	85	28.0	219	72.0
May not recommend nursing profession as a career to family members and friends because of poor supervision	102	33.6	202	66.4
Desire to practice nursing outside Nigeria	191	62.8	113	37.7
Have job satisfaction in the current organization	80	26.3	224	73.7

Table-3 showed that majority of the respondents identified insufficient cohesion with colleagues, poor safety of the work environment; undervalued nurse's opinion by medical staff and poor professional image of nursing as perceived factors influencing nurse's turnover in the hospital. Other factors include poor advancement in their career and desire to practice nursing outside Nigeria. Respondents had mixed feelings about non-recognition of nurses' additional qualification and poor remunerations.

## DISCUSSION

This study aimed at determining the relationship between job satisfaction of the employees and their socio-demographic characteristics as well as examining the perceived factors influencing nurses' turnover in the organization. The mean age of respondents was  $39 \pm 10.97$ , which implies the population of nurses working in ABUTH are relatively matured. The finding on relationship between job satisfaction and socio-demographic characteristics shows that, age was positively correlated with job satisfaction. This result is supported by Stone et al. in a study done among nurses in China hospitals, which says nurses of younger age are positively correlated with job satisfaction [16]. Other studies also reported similar positive correlation between age and job satisfaction [17-19]. These results contradict with the study from Greece army hospital where increase in job satisfaction of Army RNs had inverse relationship with nurse's age [20]. Other studies also established similar inverse association between age and job satisfaction [21-23, 19]. The positive correlation between age and job satisfaction reported in our study and indeed several other previous studies may be attributed to the fact that younger nurses experience lower levels of emotional exhaustions, which is positively related with job satisfaction and negatively with intention to turnover [16]

Nursing is one of numerous professions in which one sex comprises the clear majority of workers and gender difference reported as factor for job satisfaction [24]. Contrary to this assertion, it was established in our study that no statistical significant correlation between gender and job satisfaction. Empirical literature establishing association between gender and job satisfaction are mixed. While some reported no relationship between job satisfaction and gender [25], others reported females having higher level of job satisfaction than their male counterparts [26-28]. Some studies still reported males having more job satisfaction than females [29, 30, 18]. The differences on the findings on associations between gender and job satisfaction could be attributed to socio-cultural background and need to be investigated further.

Again this study identifies that marital status yielded weak positive correlations with job satisfaction though not statistically significant. Panisoara and Serban were of similar opinion [31]. They asserted that marital status has no statistical significant association with employees' job satisfaction. However, other studies were of contrary opinion [32, 27]. These contrarities may be due to socialization in Nigeria which has changed the societal perspectives on marital values especially in regard to responsibility. Nowadays, family responsibility is generously shouldered by both the man and woman. As such, everybody strives to develop positive coping strategies against workplace related stressors in anticipation to remain employed and maintain one's responsibilities and societal status.

Educational qualification, current designation and working hours per week yielded weak and negative correlations with job satisfaction although not statistically significant. This implies that, the more nurses attain higher qualification, higher level in their career and higher working hours per week, the less they derive job satisfaction. This report is contrary to the finding of Larrabee et al where higher educational



attainment, higher career attainment and higher working hours per week were found to have a positive relationship with job satisfaction [8]. Nurses in ABUTH have higher educational status with 30.4% having degree in nursing and 27.3% having post basic diplomas. Ideally remunerations are supposed to be based on educational attainment and number of hours covered by the employee [11]. This controversial result found from this study regarding the relationship between level of education, designation and job satisfaction may be attributed to poor and incommensurate remunerations received by nurses with higher educational attainment which could predispose them to dissatisfaction. The negative effect of working hours per week on the nurse's job satisfaction may be attributed to the fact that ABUTH is a public organization in Nigeria where salaries are paid not wages which is based on number of hours covered by nurses.

Number of years worked by the nurses and nursing professional experience of staff nurses was significantly correlated with job satisfaction positively. This result is supported by the study done in nurses of China hospitals, where nurses with less work experience and lower professional titles were positively correlated with job satisfaction [16]. This result was however contradicted by a study from Greece army hospital where increase in job satisfaction of Army RNs was predicted by more experienced ones with more years at work [20]. This may be attributed to the fact that shortage in nursing work force and unemployment simultaneously exist in the Nigerian nursing profession therefore newly graduated nurse may be highly motivated for working and they have higher satisfaction with their jobs. As such, employees are determined and resilient to protect their job and are therefore, resiliently refuting being over-empowered by unattractive work environment.

Insufficient cohesion with colleagues, poor safety of the work environment; undervalued nurse's opinion by medical staff and poor professional image of nursing were identified as perceived factors positively influencing nurse's turnover in the hospital. Other factors include poor advancement in their career and desire to practice nursing outside Nigeria. Respondents had mixed feelings about non-recognition of nurses' additional qualification and poor remunerations. Similar findings were reported among nurses in Ghana and Peoples Republic of China [33, 34]. When nurses are not satisfied with their working conditions, they would become dissatisfied with their job and consequently will begin to contemplate leaving the organisation. According to WHO push and pull factors accounts for the deepening of shortage and anticipated turnover among the healthcare workforce in Africa [35]. "Pull factors include better remunerations, better

standards of living, gaining experiences, and upgrading qualifications. Furthermore, push factors include lack of facilities, lack of promotion, ineffective management, excessive work stress, lack of training, and absence of career development" [36]. Similar findings were also reported by other researchers [37]. Employers need to provide attractive working conditions to retain nurses and attract younger generation into the profession.

## CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that age, gender, marital status; and job satisfaction yielded weak positive correlations. However, the correlation between job satisfaction and educational qualification of the respondents, current designation; number of years worked in ABUTH was found to be negative. Number of years worked, professional experience and unit of primary assignment were the only socio-demographic characteristics found to be significant predictors of job satisfaction in ABUTH. Insufficient cohesion with colleagues, poor safety of the work environment; undervalued nurse's opinion by medical staff and poor professional image of nursing were identified as perceived factors positively influencing nurse's intention to leave the hospital.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research findings the following recommendations were made:

- Management of ABUTH should focus on nurses' job enrichment by providing them with stimulating and interesting work that challenge and motivate them. Nurses should equally be given autonomy over nursing practice.
- Nurses' opinion should be respected by other professionals. Nurses professional practice judgement should not be relegated on the bases of sentiments.
- Management and supervisors should have the interest of nurses at heart by respecting and giving listening ears to their complaints and plights.
- Management should improve nurses' remunerations while taking into cognizance their experience, number of years in service and educational achievements. Salary should also be paid regularly and promptly.

## CONSENT

As per international standard respondent's written consent has been collected and preserved by the authors.

## ETHICAL APPROVAL

As per international standard, Ethical approval dated 2nd March, 2016 with the number – NMIMR – IRB CP 08/15 – 16 was obtained from The Noguchi Institute for Medical Research (NMIMR), College of Health Sciences, University of Ghana. Secondly,

institutional approval was equally obtained from the Health Research Health Committee for Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital (ABUTH), Zaria, Kaduna State, Nigeria, dated 7th April, 2016 with the number – ABUTH/HREC/T13/2016.

### COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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