

Job Satisfaction among the Nurse Educators in the Klang Valley, Malaysia

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Abstract The aims of this study were to identify the priority factors that contribute towards the job satisfaction and determine the relationship between the level of job satisfaction and salary earned by the nurse educators in the Klang Valley, Malaysia. The study had a cross-sectional design and included nurse educators ($n=66$, response rate 82.5%) working in five higher educational institutions. Data collection was conducted with a questionnaire consisting of 56 items. The respondents reported that the three highest priority factors that determine their job satisfaction were salary, benefit entitlement and working conditions. Furthermore, the study also revealed that there was a significant relationship between the level of job satisfaction and salary earned among the nurse educators.

Keywords Job Satisfaction, Nurse Educators, Nursing Shortage, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

1. Introduction

Nursing shortage is a global phenomenon in the health care discipline. In Malaysia, this phenomenon was evident through a recent report by the American Society of Registered Nurses (2007) which indicated that Malaysia needs 20,000 registered nurses in all specialization and approximately 1,000 of Malaysian nurses are leaving the nursing profession annually[1]. Hence, one of the strategies to alleviate the general nursing shortage would be to train more nurses by establishing more nursing schools. In response, the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia and the Nursing Board of Malaysia has been working closely with both the public and private higher education institutions to increase the number of nurses by providing more nursing courses as well as increased the total number of nursing students[2]. However, the dramatic expansion in the number of higher educational institutions offering nursing programmes and increased in the number of nursing students is a problematic matter because nursing education is also facing the challenge of nurse educators' shortage related to job satisfaction[3,4,5]. Thus, the shortages have created a negative effect on health care delivery systems as well as community as a whole[6].

The topic of job satisfaction among nurse educators has been studied widely by a number of researchers and approached from several different points of view such as

factors related to co-workers, work itself, working conditions, remuneration, professional growth, promotion as well as supervision[3,7]. Previous studies had revealed that high job satisfaction has been positively associated with the improved productivity of the employees as well as the retention of employees[8]. On the other hand, low job satisfaction has been linked with nurse educators leaving the profession and resulting in the shortage of nurse educators[8].

Although the subject matter of job satisfaction among nurse educators has been studied previously, there is a lacking of previous studies on job satisfaction among the nurse educators in Malaysia. Hence, in view of nursing education precedes nursing practice, it is critical to address the needs of the nursing educators by exploring the job satisfaction topic among the nurse educators to improve job satisfaction among the nurse educators.

The Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Job Satisfaction served as the research framework for this study. This study was supported by the theoretical perspectives of Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Job Satisfaction which proposed that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are originated from distinctive groups of variables which are called the hygiene factors and motivator factors[9]. In this context, the hygiene factors including pay, interpersonal relations-supervisor; subordinates and peers, supervision-technical, organization policy and administration, job security, working conditions, factors in personal life and status[10]. On the other hand, the other set of factors are those called the motivator factors, if present serve to inspire the individual to greater endeavour and accomplishment[11]. The motivator factors include recognition, achievement, possibility of growth, advancement, responsibility and work itself[10].

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Table 1.1. Reliability of instrument using coefficient Alpha (Cronbach's Alpha)

Section	Item Number	Coefficient Alpha	Total Coefficient Alpha
Section A			
Demographic particulars	1 – 8	-	-
Section B			
Job satisfaction among the nurse educators			
Achievement and Recognition	1 – 10	.739	
The Work Itself and Responsibility	11 – 17	.838	
Advancement	18 – 22	.810	
Policies and Administration	23 – 25	.896	
Interpersonal Relations	26 – 30	.791	
Supervision	31 – 34	.967	
Salary and Job Security	35 – 40	.766	
Working Conditions	41 - 44	.700	.941
Section C			
Factors contributing to job satisfaction	1-12	.816	.816
Grand Total			.926

Hence, the theoretical perspective of Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Job Satisfaction addressed the effects of hygiene and motivation factors as they correlate to job satisfaction of the workers [11]. Furthermore, the theories of Herzberg also suggested that a disconnection between the needs and motivators of nurse educators may contribute to job dissatisfaction [11]. Thus, the purpose of this study was to identify the priority factors that contribute towards the job satisfaction and determine whether there was any significant relationship between the level of job satisfaction and salary earned by the nurse educators.

2. Methodology

2.1. The Participants

The sample criterion was 'nurse educators who teach full-time nursing courses: Diploma in Nursing, Post-basic/Advanced Diploma Nursing, Bachelor in Nursing and Master in Nursing in higher educational institutions.' A convenient sampling method was applied.

In this study, the estimated sampling from a population of ten nursing institutions was consists of about 100 nurse educators in the Klang Valley. Therefore, according to the table provided by David Van Amburg of MarketSource, Inc [12], the study required a sample size of at least 79 subjects in order to attain the desired 95% of level of confident. In view of this, therefore, this study invited 80 nurse educators from ten nursing institutions in the Klang Valley to participate in this study. The questionnaires were distributed to a total of 80 nurse educators in the five higher educational institutions. A total of 66 participants returned the completed questionnaire and a response rate of 82.5% were achieved.

2.2. Instrument

A pilot survey questionnaire was developed by the researcher through comprehensive literature review. Two panels were engaged from the nursing faculty to review the

content validity analysis of the instrument. The internal consistency of the scales are summarized in Table 1.1, and ranged from 0.816 to 0.941.

A convenience sample of 20 nurse educators from two higher educational institutions was used in the pilot study. The questionnaire consisted of three sections. The first section of the questionnaire included demographic information, as shown in Table 3.1. The second section consists of the questionnaire related to the current job satisfaction: achievement and recognition, the work itself and responsibility, advancement, policy and administration, interpersonal relations, supervision, salary and job security and working conditions. This section was based on a self-assessment rating on six-point Likert-scale. The third section of the questionnaire included the factors that contributed towards nurse educators' job satisfaction. The participants were required to rank the importance of the items on ten-point Likert-scale. A score of ten points on an item would mean that the participant feels the item is the most important and a low score of one point on the item would mean that the participant feels that the item is the least important.

2.3. Data Collection Procedure

First, the researcher contacted ten higher educational institutions to ask for the study participation. Five higher educational institutions had agreed to partake in the study. Once the higher educational institutions agreed to participate in the study, all participants were informed that permission to conduct the research had been obtained from the respective higher educational institutions and participation in the study was voluntary.

The researcher also informed the participants that access to the surveys would be tightly controlled by the researchers and names of institutions or persons would not be revealed in any manner for their confidentiality. The questionnaire was administered directly to the sample using face-to-face mode and also with the assistance of two appointed questionnaire administrators. All participants were requested to send

completed questionnaires directly to the researcher or using the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelopes.

significance of relationship between the level of job satisfaction and salary earned by nurse educators.

2.4. Data Analysis

Data were analysed using Statistical Package SPSS version 14 software. Data regarding demographics are presented as frequencies, percentages, mean (*M*) and standard deviation (*SD*). Chi-square test was used to test the

3. Results

3.1. Demographic Characteristics

Table 3.1. Demographic characteristics (*n*=66)

Characteristics	Total	
	<i>n</i> (%)	<i>Mean</i> ± <i>SD</i>
Age		
25 – 34 years old	24 (36.4)	36.44 ± 6.87
35 – 44 years old	35 (53.0)	
45 – 54 years old	6 (9.1)	
55 – 64 years old	1 (1.5)	
Academic rank		
Nursing tutor	32 (48.5)	
Nursing lecturer	34 (51.5)	
Major job activity		
Classroom teaching	34 (51.5)	
Combination of clinical and classroom teaching	32 (48.5)	
Current basic salary per month		
Less than RM 2500	0 (0)	
RM 2500 – RM 3500	16 (24.2)	
RM 3501 – RM 4500	24 (36.4)	
RM 4501 – RM 5500	14 (21.2)	
More than RM 5500	12 (18.2)	
Highest educational degree earned		
Post-basic certificate/ advanced diploma	2 (3.0)	
Bachelor degree	48 (72.7)	
Master degree	14 (21.3)	
Doctorate degree	2 (3.0)	
Prior clinical experience		
1 – 5 years	15 (22.7)	
6 – 10 years	32 (48.5)	
11 – 15 years	19 (28.8)	
Characteristics of higher educational institutions		
College	32 (48.5)	
University college	23 (34.8)	
University	11 (16.7)	

Table 3.2. Priority factors contributing to job satisfaction sorted by highest mean rating (*n*= 66)

Factors contributing to job satisfaction	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Salary	9.59	.764
Benefits entitlement	9.32	1.04
Working conditions	9.17	1.06
Continuous professional development	9.06	1.05
The accurate annual appraisal/ evaluation of job	8.94	1.14
Relationships with the people that I am working with	8.88	1.16
Career advancement	8.74	1.34
Work itself and responsibility	8.74	1.41
Security of my current position	8.65	1.06
Achievement	8.14	1.40
Recognition	7.94	1.65
Organizations' policy and administration	7.03	2.36

Note: *Scores ranged from 1 (the least important) to 10 (the most important)

Table 3.3. Percentage and counts of job satisfaction by salary earned

Salary Eamed	Job Satisfaction			Row %	Chi Square	p
	Low	Fair	Good			
RM 2501 – RM 3500	18 (56.3)	14 (43.8)	0 (.0)	32 (100)	67.17	< .05
RM 3501 – RM 4500	21 (29.2)	36 (50.0)	15 (20.8)	72 (100)		
RM 4501 – RM 5500	28 (50.0)	12 (21.4)	16 (28.6)	56 (100)		
More than RM 5500	5 (8.3)	15 (25.0)	40 (66.7)	60 (100)		

Note: **=level of significant confidence 0.05 (2-tailed)

3.2. Priority Factors Contributing to Job Satisfaction

The priority factors contributing to job satisfaction are presented in Table 3.2. The respondents reported that the two highest ratings were salary ($M = 9.59$), followed by benefit entitlement ($M = 9.32$) and working conditions ($M = 9.17$). On the other hand, items with the three lowest ratings were achievement ($M = 8.14$), followed by recognition ($M = 7.94$) and organizations' policy and administration ($M = 7.03$).

As conclusion, the predominant priority factor that contributed in job satisfaction among the respondents appeared to be primarily 'salary' and 'benefit entitlement' which belong to the hygiene factor according to Herzberg's Two-factor Theory. Conversely, motivation factors of Herzberg's Two-factor Theory in this context referring to 'achievement' and 'recognition' appeared to be the least in contributing to job satisfaction.

3.3. Test of Significance of Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Salary Earned

The Chi-square statistics was used to test for significance of the relationship between job satisfaction and salary earned. Table 3.3 presented the findings from the Chi-square analysis. The result showed significant relationship between job satisfaction and salary earned; Chi-Square (6; $n=66$) = 67.17, $p < .05$. The analysis findings indicated that the lower the salary earned, the lower is the job satisfaction. As conclusion, the analysis findings indicated that the lower the salary earned, the lower is the job satisfaction.

4. Discussion

This study aimed at identifying the priority factors that contribute towards the job satisfaction. In addition, the aim of this study is to also determine whether there was a significant relationship between job satisfaction and salary earned by the nurse educators.

4.1. Priority Factors Contributing to Job Satisfaction

Priority factors contributing to job satisfaction are salary, benefit entitlement and working conditions. On the other hand, achievement, recognition and organizations' policy/administration factors were rated the least important factors contributing to job satisfaction. The findings of this

study were in totality were inconsistent with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Job Satisfaction because majority of the respondents identified that hygiene factors (salary, benefit entitlement and working conditions) are the predominant priority factor that contributed in job satisfaction. In contrast, motivation factors (achievement and recognition) of Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Job Satisfaction were identified as the least important factors in contributing to job satisfaction. According to Herzberg's Theory[4], hygiene factors cannot produce job satisfaction autonomously, but their nonexistence can lead to job dissatisfaction. On the other hand, job satisfaction is generated through the motivator factors which serve to inspire the individual to greater endeavour and accomplishment[9].

In another perspective, the research findings also may suggesting that the hygiene factors characteristics such as salary and work environment among the sample of the study were not met adequately. The inadequacy of the provision in the terms of hygiene factors could be one of the possible reasons for the sample to rank the hygiene factors as the most priority contributing factors to job satisfaction. This is true because according to Herzberg's Theory, the motivational factors would be apparent and exist in long-term if only the hygiene factors have been fulfilled and addressed[4].

4.2. The Relationship between the Job Satisfaction and Salary Earned By the Nurse Educators

The relationship between the job satisfaction and salary earned by the nurse educators showed significantly related. This is in accordance with previous literature findings, which proposed that nurse educators with higher salary ranges were significantly more satisfied[3,4]. Furthermore, salary has been described as an essential element towards job satisfaction as well as the intention to stay among the nurse educators[4]. Hence, the research findings of this study were consistent with those found in the literature.

4.3. Limitations

Limitations of this study include a convenience sampling method. There was a potential non-response bias and the findings may not be generalized[12].

5. Conclusions

The increasing need for professional nurses had greatly resulted in the mounting demand for qualified nurse educators to train and guide the future generation of nurses. The shortage of qualified nurse educators would subsequently not only affecting the quality of nursing education but also jeopardizing the overall quality of healthcare delivery. Therefore, administrators and the respective personnel such as the human resource department need to address and enhance the job satisfaction among the nurse educators. Thus, the purpose of this study was to examine the job satisfaction among the nurse educators in the aspects of priority factors that contribute towards job satisfaction and the relationship between job satisfaction and salary earned.

The findings of the study revealed that nurse educators placed a heavy emphasis on the hygiene factors (salary, benefit entitlement and working conditions) in Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Job Satisfaction. These factors were ranked as the most important factors that contributed to job satisfaction if compared with motivator factors. Furthermore, it was also evident in this study that job satisfaction is significantly related to salary earned by the nurse educators. Thus, one of the most significant approaches that can be derived from the research findings would be reviewing the current salary scale among the nurse educators since the study revealed that job satisfaction is significantly related to salary earned by the nurse educators. This approach would possibly boost the job satisfaction of the existing as well as prospect nurse educator.

Besides, this study also ought to serve as a foundation for other researchers to further explore the aspect of job satisfaction among the nurse educators in Malaysia. Job satisfaction is an important determinant towards the future nursing education as well as healthcare delivery. Thus, recruitment and retention strategies are necessary to bridge the nurse educators to the job satisfaction needs.

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