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Factors Affecting Intention to Stay Among Nursing Staff at Selected Private Hospitals

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Abstract. Many factors in the healthcare industry affect the nurse's work, but some major factors influence them to leave the organisation. Nurse retention is one of the major challenges faced by the healthcare industry, due to which the turnover rate of nurses increases. The healthcare industry is growing daily and needs more nurses, but due to the exhausting labour and challenging work, most people leave the industry early and look for better opportunities. This study aimed to determine the factors affecting nursing retention and turnover in a selected private hospital in Selangor, Malaysia. This descriptive, cross-sectional quantitative study involved 133 nursing staff through a self-administered survey questionnaire to know the respondents' viewpoints; the participants gave mixed responses about staying and leaving the organisation. However, from their statements, it is clear that they wanted the industry to improve the training and development process, work-life balance and reward and recognition policy. The high turnover rate of nurses will cause detrimental effects on patient care if nurses' lack of training and development influence nurses to leave the organisation.

Keywords: intention to stay; nurses; nursing retention; private hospital; turnover

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1. Introduction

Healthcare generally refers to a kind of business or establishment which offers services provided to people or communities by agents of the health profession to promote, maintain and restore health. In other terms it is the prevention, treatment and mix of illness and the preservation of mental and physical wellbeing through the services offered by the medical and allied health profession (Faraji et al., 2017; Ibrahim Alzamel et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2017). The human resource department is one of the main sections of the organization. It is recognized to recruit, train, reward and retain people by following their work practices. Healthcare organizations provide many jobs in every part of the world (Tangthong et al., 2014). However, it is Human resources' responsibility to put effort into recruiting and retaining the talented staff in the organization. Nursing retention is one of the major challenges faced by the healthcare organization due to which the turnover rate of nurses increases (Ibrahim Alzamel et al., 2020). Excessively high and low turnover rates have negative consequences on the success and productivity of the healthcare sector (Faraji et al., 2017; Ibrahim Alzamel et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2017). According to the Malaysian Health Ministry report of 2016, there was a shortage of nurses (Department of Statistic Malaysia, 2016).

Few studies outline the main factors that determine the level of job satisfaction for employees within the hospitality industry (Ibrahim Alzamel et al., 2020; Miao et al., 2017). These are working conditions or environment, personal fulfilment, management conditions, and using ability in the job (Faraji et al., 2017; Ibrahim Alzamel et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2017; Miao et al., 2017). On the other hand, some scholars suggest that job satisfaction of employees often includes elements such as the job itself, the relationship with the supervisor and co-workers, management beliefs, future opportunity, work environment, and compensation (Faraji et al., 2017; Ibrahim Alzamel et al., 2020; Miao et al., 2017).

Good relations with co-workers and ideal working conditions are the most positive work aspects associated with job satisfaction, while the unfair payment is the most negative aspect (Faraji et al., 2017; Lee et al., 2017; Miao et al., 2017). A positive correlation has also been found between organizational commitment and job satisfaction, while the work-life balance has also been cited as an important influence on job satisfaction (Faraji et al., 2017; Lee et al., 2017; Suleiman AlBattat & Mat Som, 2013). When work interferes with family or family interferes with work, the result is the same, which is less job satisfaction. In general, employees with limited work-life conflict tend to transfer positive aspects of their personal life to the workplace (Lee et al., 2017; Suleiman AlBattat & Mat Som, 2013).

Job characteristics and level of interaction also impact job satisfaction (Horn, 2017; Isfahani & Boustani, 2014; Lee et al., 2017; Faraji et al., 2017) as do a higher family dependence on the wages from the job and working part-time, which increase job satisfaction (Lee et al., 2017;

Faraji et al., 2017). Perceived injustices at the workplace, low salaries, and poor working conditions also cause dissatisfaction with one's job (Suleiman AlBattat & Mat Som, 2013; Tangthong et al., 2014).

Nursing retention is one of the enduring problems for this organization as it is the fastest growing organization. The nurses need more and more skilful and talented staff to stay and work for their organization for a long time, but some issues influence the nurses to leave the organization. The satisfaction of nurses is one of the major concerns for human resource managers and employers. Due to dissatisfaction with work, the nurses leave the organization. Satisfaction is a constructive feeling and emotions of nurses for their work (Faraji et al., 2017; Jehanzeb et al., 2015). The healthcare organization has examined nurses' satisfaction levels related to age and length of services (Akbari et al., 2020;Vasquez, 2014). This research aims to analyze the factors affecting nurse retention and high turnover in the selected private hospital in Selangor, Malaysia. The healthcare organization faces major challenges in retaining highly skilled staff, affecting the organization's growth and increasing the turnover rate. The researcher will examine how nurses perceive their work and what factors mainly influence the intention to stay or to leave the organization.

2. Research Methods

a. Study design and sample

This is a cross-sectional, quantitative study to determine the factors affecting the intention to stay among the nursing staff in a selected private hospital in Selangor, Malaysia. The selected private hospital has 202 registered nurses. The data was collected from the registered nurses from various departments using convenience sampling. The sample size was determined using Raosoft calculator software based on a 5% margin error, 95% confidence level and 50% response distribution. The estimated sample size required was 133 after considering a 10% attrition rate of 10%. The inclusion criteria for our study were the registered nurses who have been working in the selected private hospital for more than six months and volunteered to participate in the study.

b. Instrument

The instrument was adapted from a study on nurses' features and their awareness of their work experience in big US theme parks and attractions to discover predictors for their retention (Milman & Dickson, 2014). The questionnaire for this research was developed and provided to the targeted population using an online survey tool called Surveymonkey®, which gives out exact statistics and is easy to use. The first part of the survey consists of demographic data, which includes nurses' age, gender, and how long they have been working in the hospital. These questions help in analyzing the data as it illustrates the viewpoint of nurses in defining what age

group they belong to, their time in the hospital, and what shifts they work to balance their work and personal life.

The second part includes why nurses choose to work in the selected hospital. The participants are provided with a list of options to select from, and they can also choose one or more options. There is one more choice given as 'others' if the option the nurses are looking for is not listed, and below that, a box is provided to give their reasons. The next session involves the current organization and working with the organization, which is perceived nurse's satisfaction in the working environment. It includes various statements such as training quality, work-life balance feature, co-workers support, benefits and reward process, manager support and care. Two panels of experts determined content validity: a human resource officer and a senior ward manager. The reliability of the questionnaire was tested using the internal consistency of the items. Cronbach alpha value of more than 0.70 was acceptable in this study (Polit & Beck, 2017).

c. Ethical Considerations

The study has been approved by the Open University Malaysia Ethical Approval Committee and the Chairman of the selected hospital. The researchers started the data collection procedure by first explaining the nature of the study and study information sheet to the residents. Before distribution, certain points had been highlighted to ensure safeguard and anonymity of their privacy and confidentiality of personal information. Name, address and identification card number are not required in this study. This study was conducted voluntarily; participants are free to withdraw anytime with a reason as the record for evidence. Any relevant personal information unintentionally disclosed by participants will not be published in the research paper. The privacy and confidentiality had been well maintained throughout the procedure.

3. Research Results

One hundred thirty-three sets of questionnaires were distributed to all the registered nurses in the private hospital. Total questionnaires received was a 100% response rate. IBM Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 25 was used in the data analysis.

Table 1 Descriptive analysis of Socio-demographic Data (n=133)

Socio-demographic	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age		
21-25	31	23.3
26-30	52	39.1
31-35	35	26.3
36-40	14	10.5
41-45	1	0.8
Gender		
Male	20	15.0
Female	113	85.0

Socio-demographic	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Working Experience in Hospital K		
< 1 year	14	10.5
1-5 years	65	48.9
6-10 years	26	19.5
11-15 years	19	14.3
16 years and above	9	6.8
Working hour's nature		
Shift hour	99	74.4
Office hour	34	25.6
Reasons working in Hospital K		
Interest	10	7.5
Attractive salary	48	36.1
Career advancement opportunity	52	39.1
Flexible working hours	11	8.3
Sponsorship for further study	5	3.8
Have student internship	1	0.8
Have hospital graduated	4	3.0
Others	2	1.5

As shown in Table 1, most respondents were 26-30 years old (n=52, 39.1%), followed by age group 31-35 years old (n=35; 26.3%). Meanwhile, the lowest age group was 41-45 (n=1; 8%). Most registered nurses have worked in Hospital K for 1-5 years (n=65; 48.9%), followed by 6-10 years working (n=26; 19.5%). Only 6.8% (n=9) have worked for 16 years and above. This indicated that nurses primarily dominated the nursing workforce in Hospital K in their prime years. The majority of the respondents were female (n=113; 85%) and three-third (n=9; 74.4%) on shift duty. These results were expected due to the nursing profession being female-dominated and involving shift duty rotations. Career advancement opportunity was the most reasonable among nurses with 52 (39.1%) due to the brand name of Hospital K. Second reason chosen by nurses is salary with 48 (36.1%). The lowest reasons among them are students with 1 (8%).

Table 2 Satisfaction of working environment (n = 133)

Subscale	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Induction training was good		
Disagree	5	3.8
Neither agree or disagree	20	15.0
Agree	90	67.7
Strongly agree	18	13.5
Friendly and helpful staff		
Disagree	3	2.3
Neither agree or disagree	19	14.3
Agree	90	67.7
Strongly agree	21	15.8
Enjoy working with the current management team		
Disagree	5	3.8
Neither agree or disagree	27	20.3
Agree	78	58.6
Strongly agree	23	17.3
Satisfied with the staff benefits provided currently		
Disagree	6	4.5

Subscale	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Neither agree or disagree	35	26.3
Agree	77	57.9
Strongly agree	15	11.3
Financial rewards and bonuses provided regularly		
Disagree	7	5.3
Neither agree or disagree	33	24.8
Agree	77	57.9
Strongly agree	16	12.0
Good career development after joining the organization		
Disagree	2	1.5
Neither agree or disagree	32	24.1
Agree	73	54.9
Strongly agree	26	19.5
Consistent training is provided		
Disagree	3	2.3
Neither agree or disagree	33	24.8
Agree	70	52.6
Strongly agree	27	20.3

As table 2 shows that the induction training was good for the hospital. Most 90 (67.7%) agree about the induction training. Nurses agree that friendly and helpful staff are the most enjoyable working environment with 90 (67.7%), followed by nurses who strongly agree with 21 (15.8%). The nurses who agree that working in current organizations are around 78 (58.6%), followed by neither agreeing nor disagreeing around 27 (20.3%). 77 (57.6%) nurses agree, and 15 (11.3%) strongly agree and are satisfied with the hospital's benefits. 77 (57.9%) nurses agree, and only 7 (5.3%) nurses disagree with the financial rewards and bonuses provided to the nurses in a hospital. There are 73 (54.9%) nurses who agreed that the organization helped them develop their careers, and only 2 (1.5%) nurses did not agree about the statement. There were 70 (52.6%) nurses who agreed that consistent training is provided about new developments in the organizations and only 3 (2.3%) nurses who were disagree.

Table 3 Perception of job satisfaction (n =133)

Subscale	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
The most interesting part of my job is meeting my patients		
Disagree	3	2.3
Neither agree or disagree	28	21.1
Agree	84	63.2
Strongly agree	18	13.5
The most interesting part of my job is that I can help my patients		
Disagree	2	1.5
Neither agree or disagree	27	20.3
Agree	82	61.7
Strongly agree	21	15.8
Intend to leave the organization to gain more salary in other organization		
Disagree	1	0.8

Subscale	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Neither agree or disagree	7	5.3
Agree	46	34.6
Strongly agree	79	59.4
Intend to stay in the organization if I receive a higher than my current salary		
Disagree	1	0.8
Neither agree or disagree	6	4.5
Agree	49	36.8
Strongly agree	77	57.9
The most interesting part of my job is meeting my friends		
Strongly disagree	2	1.5
Disagree	7	5.3
Neither agree or disagree	32	24.1
Agree	75	56.4
Strongly agree	17	12.8

As shown in Table 3, 84 (63.2%) nurses agree that patients are the most interesting part of their job and only 3 (2.3%) disagree about the statement. Around 82 (61.7%) nurses felt the most interesting part of their job is helping patients, and only 2 (1.5%) nurses disagreed. 79 (59.4%) nurses strongly agree, and 46 (34.6%) nurses agree that having an intention to leave the organization to gain more salary in other organizations. 77 (57.9%) nurses strongly agree, and 49 (36.8%) nurses agree that will stay if receive a higher than current salary. There were 75 (56.4%) nurses who agreed and only 2 (1.5%) nurses who disagreed that an interesting part of their job is meeting friends.

4. Research Discussion

a. Demographic Data

This study was carried out among 133 registered nurses in a selected private hospital in Selangor, Malaysia. The results showed that most nurses are female in their prime years of family and career pathway. Most registered nurses had chosen to work in the organization due to career advancement and salary. A possible reason could be the job security in the organization. Hospital K is under ABC Healthcare Berhad, Malaysia's leading homegrown healthcare group, consisting of 21 hospitals since 2006. Hospitals under ABC Healthcare Berhad have served 2.6 million local and international patients. This leads to the opportunity for nurses and other healthcare professionals remain their careers in one of the big healthcare companies in Malaysia.

b. Training and Development

Hospital K is increasing, and due to the competitive market, the nurses are imposed to provide quality and quantity service to the patients. Also, the healthcare organization industry demands a professional approach from the nurses, due to which the human resource department faces

challenges. Lack of training and development of nurses influences the nurses to leave the organization. As discussed earlier in the research, if the nurses were provided proper training and motivated by increasing their pay and rewarding them, the organization could retain them. This research has proved that the hospital has about 70-90 nurses who agree that organizations have provided proper training for their development career and job satisfaction. Previous research has shown that education and development is an essential retention strategy; establishing and supporting education and working organizations benefits organizations (Tangthong et al., 2014). Training new employees ensure they are comfortable in their new work environment and reduces the chances of them getting frustrated in their new position (Faraji et al., 2017; Lee et al., 2017). A recent study back home reported that workload, work environment, home/work balance, and social interaction among Malaysian nurses influence turnover intention (Ibrahim Alzamel et al., 2020). Research shows that employees who feel they have the opportunity to develop new skills through training and development in the workplace are more satisfied with their jobs and are, as a result, more likely to remain loyal to an organization (Horn, 2017; Tangthong et al., 2014). Training of employees also develops the output of the employees leading to higher quality services which improve the value of the employees to the organization, thereby improving the desire of the organization to keep hold of them in the long term (Horn, 2017; Jehanzeb et al., 2015).

c. Working environment

Hospital K has created a good environment for the nurses. About 70 to 90 nurses agreed and were satisfied with the environment. Workplace friends influence performance over and above purely instrumental or pure friendship-based relationships (Lee et al., 2017; Tangthong et al., 2014). This satisfaction influenced them positively to stay with the organization. Nurses are also likely to be more motivated and productive when they are happy with their work conditions. In addition, the nurses enjoy working more without feeling judged as a poor performers (Faraji et al., 2017; Lee et al., 2017). The reason is that having friends in the organization, especially if they work in other departments, gives access to information through the informal network they otherwise do not get. Employees with close friends at work reported being in a good mood more often, which could spill over into positive effects on the work being performed (Faraji et al., 2017; Lee et al., 2017).

d. Financial reward and bonus

Employees respond to appreciation at work, especially when it is expressed through recognition of their efforts because it confirms their work is valued. A simple thank you goes a long way and will make employees feel good and benefit the organisation's progress (Jehanzeb et al., 2015). The research shows that nurses were satisfied with the benefit provided and enjoyed with current work. Hospital K provides three times bonus per annum, medical benefits, free delivery, licenses allowance, educational allowance for post-basic nurses and many more. Moreover,

Hospital K provide many activities that nurses can contribute to making them feel enjoyable working here.

e. Perception of job satisfaction

Job satisfaction of nurses is most important for Hospital K. Job satisfaction refers to a person's feeling of satisfaction on the job, which acts as a motivation to work (Faraji et al., 2017; Lee et al., 2017; Tangthong et al., 2014). Employees' satisfaction with their jobs offers important clues concerning the culture and growth of an organization (Ibrahim Alzamel et al., 2020; Suleiman AlBattat & Mat Som, 2013). Good relations with co-workers and ideal working conditions are the most positive work aspects associated with job satisfaction, while unfair payment is the most negative (Isfahani & Boustani, 2014). The research shows that hospital K nurses are most interested when meeting friends and patients. Helping patient makes them more satisfied when doing work. It is a structured setting where new graduates can get a good taste of different kinds of nursing (Wong et al., 2018). However, nurses still have the intention to leave if they receive an offer higher than their current salary to improve their living.

Limitation

This research used a small sample of 133 nurses in one hospital only. Therefore, it is not appropriate to generalize to other private hospitals in other states.

Implication

Finding from this research impacted the organization to retain nurses in future. Current nurses were satisfied with induction training and the reward and benefit provided. However, they still intend to leave if they get a better offer or salary. Maybe management could suggest increasing the salary depending on their performance or contribution to the organization. Management can also provide one box suggestion to the employee who wants to give suggestion or comment about dissatisfaction to the organization so that management can prevent earlier for better improvement. The organization's working environment also mainly improves nurses' job satisfaction. Therefore, current nurses want management to increase more activities that can give rewards and make much fun when meeting friends, such as sports days, educational activities or nurses' night parties as staff appreciation in Hospital K.

5. Conclusion and Future Research

Nursing retention is one of the enduring problems for this organization as it is the fastest growing organization. The nurses need more and more skilful and talented staff to stay and work for their organization for a long time, but some issues influence the nurses to leave the organization. The satisfaction of nurses is one of the major concerns for human resource managers and employers. Due to dissatisfaction with work, the nurses leave the organization. People are attracted by healthcare organizations due to various reasons like career progression,

meeting new people, working in a different environment and many others. Hospitals are an especially good place for novice nurses to start their careers. This research figured out that people choose to work because for their career development and salary for their living.

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